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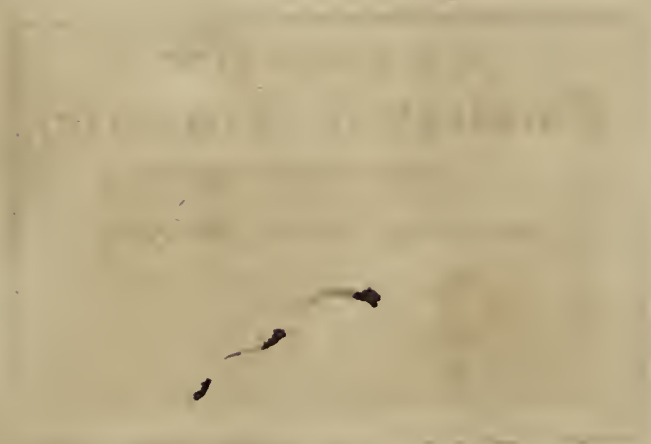
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# ECLECTIC

## MORAL PHILOSOPHY.

PREPARED FOR

LITERARY INSTITUTIONS AND GENERAL USE.

✓  
BY REV. J. R. BOYD, A.M.,  
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AUTHOR OF  
"ELEMENTS OF RHETORIC AND LITERARY CRITICISM."

"Moral conduct is the business of every man; and therefore the knowledge of it ought to be within the reach of all."—DR. REID.

HARPER & BROTHERS, PUBLISHERS,  
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1846.



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## P R E F A C E.

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THE work now offered to the public owes its production to the idea that it was needed by instructors in their educational labors ; at the same time the wants of the general reader have been duly regarded. It is well known, by those who have some experience in the branch of moral instruction, that there are few works indeed that are suitable to the wants of a large proportion of youth at school. The treatise of Dr. Paley, while it contains some admirable chapters, abounds in others that are erroneous, defective, and pernicious ; so that it cannot be safely studied without an able and discriminating commentator at hand, to point out the existing errors, and to supply defects. Beside, much of the matter contained in it is of little interest or practical utility.

It was because he dissented from many of the principles contained in Paley, and was obliged to offer on many points a different course of instruction, that Dr. Wayland, as he informs us, found it convenient to prepare, for the use of his collegiate classes, a system of his own ; and this has been regularly advancing in public favor, and has deservedly supplanted, in not a few institutions, the defective and erroneous, though generally popular, work of Paley.

The inquiry will now naturally arise, Why still another text-book is urged upon public notice, acceptance, use, since the work of Dr. Wayland stands

among the ablest, if it is not the ablest, treatise on moral science extant?

The compiler is here most happy to acknowledge the distinguished talent of Dr. Wayland, his former instructor, and the surpassing excellence of the work he has prepared, and also its full adaptation to the class of scholars for whom it was specially intended (those in an advanced stage of collegiate training), *provided* that it is used by an instructor so able as its accomplished author. The account which Dr. Wayland has himself given of the character of his own work, together with some experience of the compiler in the use of that work with students in an academic course, forms a sufficient apology for the preparation of the work now offered, which will be found, it is hoped, better adapted than the former to the capacities of the great mass of instructors and students, because more full and explicit in its delineations of moral duties. It is intended to supply a deficiency which they would find in Dr. Wayland's work, and which is noticed by himself, in the following terms, in the preface:—

“I have rarely gone into extended discussion, but have contented myself with the attempt to state the moral law, and the reason of it, in as few and as comprehensive terms as possible. The illustration of the principles, and the application of them to cases in ordinary life, I have generally left to the instructor, or to the student himself.”

The compiler is persuaded that, for most academic institutions and union district-schools, a work is needed on moral science, which, while it expounds the great principles of the theory of morals in a full and explicit

manner, shall also exhibit in detail the greater and the lesser moralities of life, since in most cases, with teachers and students, the text-book must furnish nearly all that is thought of on the subject.

The compiler would not have ventured to prepare what might be denominated an original work—the product of the original investigations of his own mind,—because he must in that case have offered to the public a work much inferior to many now in use ; but he does venture to present a work that combines, in a connected form, what he considers *the best thoughts of not a few of the most gifted moral writers of the present century*, not of those only who have written a Moral Philosophy, but of others.

The work is almost strictly a compilation ; yet it has cost the labor of extensive reading, of an anxious, and often perplexing comparison of various authors, of the preparation of a new arrangement of topics, and of a somewhat novel mode of treatment.

The leading questions that have been prepared for each article ; the prominent and specific scriptural sources whence the duties of man have been derived ; the ample exposition of the Ten Commandments ; the moral lessons derived from the biography of Christ ; the numerous illustrations of duty by anecdote ; the introduction of some of the most convincing arguments for the truth of Christianity, and the removal of many popular objections and misrepresentations in respect to the moral teachings of the Bible ; the freedom from abstruseness of style, and the omission of many topics, which, though often introduced in works of this sort, are not particularly important or interesting ; the high moral standard to which the student is continually

referred ; the light thrown upon the preceptive parts of the sacred volume ; and the intended adaptation of the work to form, after the purest rules, the character and conduct of the young :—all these properties, which, it is humbly believed, the work will be allowed to possess, seem to commend it to the acceptance, not only of instructors, but of all who feel interested in learning the various duties of man—the modes also in which the law of the Supreme Governor is violated, and the motives which should influence to obedience, together with the good effects of it upon individuals and the world at large.

“ When the obligations of morality are taught,” says Dr. Johnson, “ let the sanctions of Christianity never be forgotten ; by which it will be shown that they give strength and luster to each other : religion will appear to be the voice of reason, and morality will be the will of God.” The following work is constructed upon this important and fundamental principle.

Let it not be supposed, however, that the following work, because it goes to the Scriptures as the best of the sources of information with respect to our duty, is, in any proper sense, a theological or sectarian work. The *morals* found in the Book of Divine Revelation are here exhibited, while the doctrines of that book, however interesting and important, have been left to the province of the theologian.

It will be observed that the compiler has generally given credit at the close of each chapter, or at the end, sometimes, of a paragraph, to the author whose sentiments or language is employed. In many cases the thoughts have been condensed ; in others they appear in the exact language of the original authors,



although the marks of quotation are generally omitted. The compiler has labored to make the best text-book in his power, with the best helps before him, availing himself freely, when he judged best, of their language as well as their thoughts. This remark applies only to foreign authors. When the language of American authors is used, the marks of quotation are uniformly employed.

To inspire confidence in the character of this work, and in its adaptation to general usefulness, particularly in academies, if not also in colleges, the compiler begs leave to append a list of the authors to whom, principally, he has been indebted for what appears upon the following pages.

Dugald Stewart's Philosophy of the Active and Moral Powers of Man. Works, vol. v.

Dr. Abercrombie on the Moral Powers.

Dr. Beattie's Moral Science.

Dr. Whewell's Elements of Morality, 2 vols.

Dr. Chalmers' Natural Theology and Moral Philosophy

Dr. John Dick's Lectures.

Dr. Thomas Dick's Philosophy of Religion.

Bishop Wilson's Evidences of Christianity, vol. ii.

Paley's Moral Philosophy.

Archbishop Secker on the Commandments.

Dr. Dewar's Moral Philosophy, 2 vols.

Dymond's Essays on Morality.

John Angell James's Help to Domestic Happiness.

John Angell James's Christian Charity.

Barnes on Slavery.

Channing on Slavery.

Wardlaw's Christian Ethics.

Winslow on Civil and Social Duties.

Bishop Butler's Sermons on Human Nature.

Bishop Butler's Analogy of Natural and Revealed Religion.

Dr. Wayland's Moral Science.



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# MORAL PHILOSOPHY.

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## INTRODUCTION.

### NATURE, SOURCES, AND OBJECTS OF MORAL PHILOSOPHY.

1. DR. WAYLAND defines Moral Philosophy to be *the science of Moral Law*.

Dr. Paley describes it as that *science which teaches men their duty, and the reasons of it*.

Dr. Spring represents it to be *the science which treats of the nature of human actions, of the motives and laws which govern them, and of the ends to which they ought to be directed*.

2. As a science, Moral Philosophy must be founded upon just views of our moral constitution, and of the various relations which we sustain toward other beings and things.

3. While to some extent the study of man and his relations may enable a philosopher to construct an accurate system of morals, all experience has shown that no philosopher has adequately succeeded, without resorting for aid to the perfect system of duty contained in the holy scriptures.

If, therefore, our object be, not to test the ingenuity and superiority of human reason, but to supply ourselves with a correct, explicit, comprehensive, and reliable exposition of human duty, also with the reasons upon which it is founded, and the highest motives for its performance, we should apply ourselves not to the researches of human reason only, but to those infallible instructions which our benevolent Creator has kindly furnished, in condescension to our ignorance, perverseness, and errors. Indeed, it is too late in the day for educated men in Christian lands, to be able to ascertain how far the unassisted faculties of man can go, in acquiring a knowledge of the

foundation and the rules of moral action; for the prominent principles of Christian morality are so interwoven into the opinions, intercourse, and practices of modern civilized society, and so familiar to the mind of every man educated in a Christian land, that it is impossible to eradicate the ideas of them from the mind, when it attempts to trace the duty of man solely on the principles of reason.

When the true principles of morality are once communicated and understood through the medium of revelation, reason can demonstrate their utility and their conformity to the character of God, to the order of the universe, and to the relations which subsist among intelligent agents. But we are by no means in a situation to determine whether they could ever have been discovered and clearly established by the investigations of the unassisted powers of the human mind. This point will come under review again, and be more fully discussed.

4. Moral philosophers have justly been described by Foster, as for the most part seeming anxious to avoid everything that might subject them to the appellation of Christian divines. They have regarded their department as a science complete in itself; and they investigate the foundation of morality, define its laws, and affix its sanctions, in a manner generally so distinct from Christianity, that the reader would almost conclude that religion to be *another* science complete in itself.

5. An *entire* separation of Moral Philosophy from Christianity it is hardly possible to maintain; since the latter has decided some moral questions on which reason was dubious or silent; and since that final retribution which the New Testament has so luminously foreshown, is evidently the greatest of sanctions. To make *no* reference, while inculcating moral principles, to a judgment to come, on what has been confessed to be divine authority, would look like systematic irreligion. But still it is striking to observe how small a portion of the ideas which distinguish the New Testament from other books many moral philosophers have thought indispensable to a theory in which they professed to include the sum of the duty and interests of man. A serious reader is constrained to feel either that there is too much in *that* book, or too little in theirs. On the whole it must be concluded that there

cannot but be something very defective in the theory of morality which but slightly acknowledges the religion of Christ, and takes so little of its peculiar character.

[Foster's Essays.]

6. The general path of duty has been made plain, in the Bible, to every one who is inclined to walk in it; and whoever wishes to be assisted and directed in his progress toward moral perfection will find, in the precepts of Moses, the proverbs of Solomon, the discourses of Jesus Christ, and the practical parts of the apostolic epistles, maxims and precepts and motives inculcated infinitely superior, in regard both to their authority and their excellence, to those of all other systems of moral philosophy, whether ancient or modern. There is a simplicity, a warmth, a soul-stirring energy in the precepts of Scripture which is adapted to interest, and control, and benefit the mind, to a degree far beyond what is met with in the works of moralists, from which have been excluded as far as possible the light and power of the Scriptures.

7. A laborious effort to discover moral rules, by research into the moral constitution of man, could it be fully successful, which it cannot, is no longer needed; since we have a code of moral law established by divine authority, and therefore adapted to the nature and relations of men,—the very code, consequently, which would be deduced from a complete and perfectly accurate analysis of human nature, if the philosopher could be found, competent to make it.

[Dick's Philosophy of Religion.]

There is also a great advantage, in respect to moral effect, to employ the precepts of a moral code that is recognized as supremely authoritative and obviously infallible.

Accordingly it is well remarked by some writer in a recent number of the Princeton Review, that it seems to be little better than waste of time and labor to analyze the moral nature of man for the purpose of deriving from that nature the laws by which it should be governed, or, in other words, a natural morality, when we have a moral code resting upon divine authority, embracing everything that pertains to practical ethics, pointing out as well the proper *motive* of action as the proper rule. Favored as we are with "the law of the Lord which is perfect," what possible reason can we have for endeavoring (according to an article in the Encyc. Brit.) to determine what man's

business is, or what conduct he is obliged to pursue, by inspecting his constitution, taking every part to pieces, examining their mutual relations one to the other, and the common effect or tendency of the whole ?

8. In the words of the reviewer, just referred to, *the proper business of Moral Philosophy*, is not to discover Laws, but adaptations ; not to find out rules of conduct, but to show the perfect fitness which exists between those moral laws which God has enacted and that moral nature which He has given to man, the subject of those Laws.

The advantage of this will consist in causing us the more highly to appreciate the rules of duty laid down in the sacred scriptures, and to feel deeply our obligation to yield them a cordial and constant regard.

9. A system derived, in a good measure, from the sacred scriptures, is not needless, as may erroneously have been inferred from some of the preceding remarks, but is required for several purposes.

It classifies the rules that are dispersed through the sacred volume, and condenses the light which is there scattered : it expounds general precepts, and traces them out in all their prominent bearings and ramifications : it applies the principles of Moral Law to particular circumstances in private or public life : it exposes the mistakes into which men have fallen, and sets forth the various objects to which duty requires their attention to be directed.

We trust it will appear on the study of this work, that some valuable purposes have been answered in its preparation.

10. It is desirable that a work on moral science should be constructed in such a manner as to move, while it instructs ; to interest in the practice, while it furnishes the knowledge, of duty ; and that it should enter into the *detail* of duties in all the relations and more prominent circumstances in which the student can be placed, and not deal, as most systems do, in generalities which exert no practical moral influence. Illustrative examples are useful also, in securing the proper influence of the study of morals.

This study should be directed, not primarily, as it too frequently has been, to the sharpening and invigorating of the intellectual powers, in teaching us to make accurate analysis and subtle distinctions ; but its particular aim



should be, to cultivate, as well as to expand the moral powers—to make the student moral, as well as to teach him what morality is.

11. Authors have pursued various methods: that which has been adopted in this work, seems to be natural, and adapted to the ends specified above.

I. As Ethics cannot be properly understood without some knowledge of Natural Religion, that is, without some knowledge of the *character, providence, and government of God*, the first Book is occupied with a brief exposition of these topics.

II. Having examined these topics—the grand basis of all sound morality—it has been judged useful to take in the next place a cursory survey of the *Active and Moral Powers*, and of the *moral condition of man*.

III. The *principles and rules of Moral Action and Obligation* are next considered.

IV. The *Rights of Man* growing out of the relations of human society.

V. The *relative importance of Natural and Revealed Morality*.

VI. The *various branches of Human Duty*. This Book will embrace (1.) a consideration of the *Duties which respect ourselves*, and which may be learned in a great measure from an investigation of our Active and Moral Powers.

(2.) It defines the *Duty of Man, chiefly toward other beings*, as it may be learned, from the two fundamental Laws of Love to God, and to our Neighbor; from the Law delivered by our Savior—"All things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them;" from St. Paul's description of love to our neighbor; from a view of man under certain general relations; from the Ten Commandments; and from the biography of Christ and of his followers.

12. Compared with other branches of an academic or collegiate course, Moral Philosophy deserves to take precedence of all others; and yet, especially in academies and common schools, it is of all others most neglected, or imperfectly taught.

It must be conceded that our happiness is more closely connected with a correct knowledge and faithful performance of our various duties, than with the highest attainments in literature or science apart from this: it will also

be conceded that the young, of all others, stand most in need of being made familiar with the rightful claims of other beings, and of their own moral nature: it will also be conceded that the highest interests of society are dependent on the proper moral culture and behavior of those who are in a course of school education: it will also be granted, that Moral Philosophy, to be well understood, deeply felt, and regularly practiced, must be carefully studied and inculcated in seminaries of instruction, even though for the sake of this, some other branch of learning be neglected, or receive less than the usual share of the student's and instructor's time.

In fact, *to know, to love, and to perform our duties*, in the various relations we sustain, *is the highest end and attainment of man*. The proper means therefore should be provided and employed for this purpose.

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1. What are some of the definitions of Moral Philosophy that have been given by popular writers upon that science?

2. What is the proper basis of this science?

3. Is reason capable of itself to derive, simply from the study of human nature and society, a correct and ample system of morals?

4. What course have moral philosophers generally pursued?

5. Is it wise or expedient, at this day, and in this Christian country, to attempt to separate Moral Philosophy from Christianity?

6. In order to acquire a practical knowledge of our duty, and of the proper motives to its performance, is it necessary to study voluminous systems of ethical science?

7. What then may be said of the philosophy which aims to discover moral rules simply by elaborate research into the moral constitution of man?

8. What then is the proper business of Moral Philosophy?

9. What further advantage may be derived from a system of Moral Philosophy that is derived, in a good measure, from the sacred scriptures?

10. In a work upon Moral Science, is it proper to aim at nothing more than an exhibition simply of the relations and duties of life?

11. Method adopted in the treatment of the science, in this volume?

12. What importance deserves to be attached to the study of Moral Philosophy?

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NOTE. In teaching the following work, it may be expedient to allow scholars of undisciplined mind, to omit the study of the first four Books, until they shall have become familiar with the following Books.

The questions at the end of each section may be neglected or used, according to the ability or incompetency of the scholar to study the work thoroughly without them; and according to the judgment and taste of the instructor. They are of such a nature generally, as not to supersede the necessity of close application on the part of students that may use them; and by a large number of teachers they may be found to diminish the labor of instruction, and to render it effective.

## BOOK I.

THE BEING, PERFECTIONS, AND MORAL GOVERNMENT  
OF GOD, MADE KNOWN BY THE CREATION.

## CHAPTER I.

## THE EXISTENCE OF GOD.

13. NATURAL Theology explains what human reason can discover or prove, concerning the being and attributes of God. In respect of certainty it is equal to any science, for its proofs rise to demonstration. In point of dignity it is superior to all others, its object being the Creator of the universe. Its utility is so great, that it lays the only sure foundation of human society and human happiness.

14. The proofs of the divine existence are innumerable, and continually force themselves upon our observation; and are withal so clear and striking, that nothing but the most obstinate prejudice and extreme depravity of heart and understanding could ever bring any rational being to disbelieve or doubt of it.

15. To say there is a God, we have only to see the impress of his being and attributes; but (says Dr. Chalmers), to be able to say with "the fool" there is no God, we must have roamed over all nature, and seen that no mark of a divine footstep was there; we must have searched into the records not of one planet only, but of all worlds, and thence gathered that throughout the wide realms of immensity, not one exhibition of a living and reigning God has ever been made. For man *not to know of a God* he has only to sink beneath the level of our common nature, but *to deny him* he must be a God himself.

Upon this point, Foster also has well observed :—"The wonder turns on the great process by which a man could grow to the immense intelligence that can know that there is no God. This intelligence involves the very at-

tributes of Divinity while a God is denied—omnipresence and omniscience.”

Atheism in its *tendency* is utterly subversive of morals, and consequently of happiness. They therefore, who teach atheistical doctrines, or who endeavor to make men doubtful in regard to this great and glorious truth, THE BEING OF GOD, do everything in their power to overturn government, to unhinge society, to eradicate virtue, to destroy happiness.

When we profess to demonstrate the existence of God, we speak of a being, underived, independent, immutable, and possessed of every possible perfection. If one or more perfections were wanting, we might conceive another being who possessed them all, and that other would be God.

16. The FIRST ARGUMENT we shall adduce in proof of the divine existence, consists of an *inference from the present existence of ourselves, and of the other parts of the universe*, and may thus be stated: “Since something exists now, something must have existed from eternity.”

We are assured of our own existence by consciousness, and of the existence of other beings by the evidence of our senses, to which we give implicit credit by the law of our nature, without paying the least regard to the attempts of skeptical philosophers to invalidate their testimony.

Hence we infer that something must always have existed: for if ever there was a time when nothing existed, there must have been a time when something began to be; and that something must have come into being without a cause; since, by the supposition, there was nothing before it. But that a thing should begin to exist, and yet proceed from no cause, is both absurd and inconceivable; all men, by the law of their nature, being necessarily determined to believe that whatever begins to exist proceeds from some cause. Beings could not make themselves, for this would suppose them to have existed before they existed; and they could not have sprung up by *chance*, for chance signifies no cause of any kind, and is merely a word expressing our ignorance of the cause. Therefore some being must have existed from eternity.

This being must have been either dependent on something else, or not dependent on anything else. Now an eternal succession of dependent beings, or a being which



is dependent and yet exists from eternity, is impossible. For if every part of such a succession be dependent, then the whole must be so; and, if the whole be dependent, there must be something on which it depends; and that something must be prior in time to that which depends on it, which is impossible if that which is dependent be from eternity. It follows that there must be an eternal and independent being on whom all other beings depend.

17. The atheist, being compelled to concede that something has existed from eternity, tells us that that something is the universe itself; that Nature is underived and self-existent. He has no objection to an eternal being, if that being is not understood to be endowed with intelligence and power, and above all, to be possessed of such moral perfections as justice and purity, the thought of which would lay a restraint upon his conduct, and create the disquieting apprehension of a future reckoning.

18. With respect to the hypothesis that the universe is an eternal existence;—the human race is an important part of the universe, which, according to this hypothesis, has always existed by an eternal succession. Of the individuals who compose this succession, not one is self-existent, but each is derived from his immediate predecessors. Here then is a series or succession, every part of which had a beginning; and we ask, how could a succession be eternal, although all its parts had a beginning? How could all the parts have a beginning, and yet the whole be without beginning? It involves an express contradiction.

The same reasoning may be applied to the other parts of the universe. The various races of animals and vegetables; the diurnal motion of the earth; the revolutions of the heavenly bodies; and in a word, all things, the duration of which is measured by hours and days and years, must have had a beginning.

19. When atheists affirm that the universe proceeds from chance, they must mean, either that the universe has no cause at all, or that its cause did not act intelligently or with design, in the production of it. That the universe proceeds from no cause, we have seen to be absurd, and therefore we shall overturn all the atheistical notions concerning chance, if we can show, what indeed is easily shown, and what no considerate person can be ignorant

of, that the cause of the universe is intelligent and wise, and in creating it must have acted with intelligence and wisdom.

20. The SECOND ARGUMENT for the existence of Deity, is *founded on the proofs of design in the universe*, according to the obvious dictate of reason, that where design appears there must be a designer; where there is a plan there must be a mind in which it was conceived. The adaptation of means to an end presupposes a being who had the end in view, and perceived the fitness of the means. The universe is full of designs. They are visible in its general frame, and in its particular parts.

21. The refuge of the atheist, when pressed with this argument, is to say, that the wisdom is in nature: but he speaks unintelligibly, and we are sure does not understand himself. Wisdom is an attribute of mind, and must reside in a being distinct from the universe, as the maker of a machine is distinct from the machine itself. That being is God, "wonderful in counsel, excellent in working."

22. If we lighted upon a book containing a well-digested narrative of facts, or a train of accurate reasoning, we should never think of calling it a work of chance, but would immediately pronounce it the production of a cultivated mind. If we saw in a wilderness a building well-proportioned, commodiously arranged, and furnished with taste, we should conclude without hesitation, and without the slightest suspicion of mistake, that human intellect and human labor had been employed in planning and erecting it.

In cases of this kind an atheist would reason precisely as other men do. Why then does he not draw the same inference from the proofs of design which are discovered in the works of creation? While the premises are the same, why is the conclusion different? Upon what pretext of reason does he deny that a work, in all the parts of which wisdom appears, is the production of an intelligent author, and attribute the universe to chance, to nature, to necessity, to anything, although it should be a word without meaning, rather than to God?

23. It is impossible to survey the objects around us with any degree of attention, and not perceive marks of design, ends aimed at, and means employed to accomplish those ends.

We need to go no further in quest of evidence than *our own frame*, which appears the more admirable the more carefully it is examined, and the more intimately it is known.

No person who considers the use of the *eye*, and is acquainted with its internal structure, so skillfully adapted to the transmission and refraction of the rays of light, can any more doubt that it was intended for the purpose of vision, than he can doubt, when he understands the construction of the telescope, that it was intended to enable us to see objects at a distance.

No man doubts, when he examines the external form and internal configuration of the *ear*, that it is an instrument expressly provided for the conveyance of sound; or that the *lungs* were made for respiration; the *stomach* for the reception and concoction of our food; and the wonderful system of vessels, known by the names of *arteries* and *veins*, for carrying the blood from the heart to every part of the body, and then returning it to its source.

No man can doubt that the design of *glands* is to secrete; of *nerves*, to propagate feeling and motion; of the *teeth*, so differently formed, to cut and masticate; of *legs*, to support the body, and move it from place to place; of *arms* and *hands* divided into fingers, to perform the various operations which are necessary to our subsistence and comfort.

24. The *bodies of the inferior animals*, in their general structure, bear a striking analogy to our own. When a difference is found, the proofs of wisdom multiply upon us, for it manifestly proceeds from an intention to accommodate the animal, or to adapt it to its peculiar circumstances. It is comprehensive wisdom; wisdom which can command not only one system of means, but a variety of expedients, to meet the diversity of cases which were necessary to the replenishing of the different parts of nature with inhabitants.

25. If one animal lives upon herbs, another upon seeds, and a third upon the flesh of other animals, we find that while they are in common furnished with a stomach, this member is differently constructed in each, so as to receive and digest its peculiar food.

We observe again, that whether animals move upon the surface of the earth, or fly in the air, or swim in the

waters, their external form and internal organization are admirably accommodated to their mode of life, and to the place of their habitation.

26. Variety amid uniformity is an evidence upon which we may confidently depend, that what appears to be design is not the effect of chance, or of a blind necessity which would always produce the same results, but of an intelligent mind, fertile in contrivances, and in every instance choosing the best.

*Apparent Irregularities and Defects in Creation explained.*

27. The wonderful contrivance which appears in the arrangement of the solar system, or even in the human body, abundantly proves the Creator to be infinitely wise. That he has not thought fit to make all things equally beautiful and excellent, can never be an imputation upon his wisdom and goodness: for how absurd would it be to say that he would have displayed more wisdom, if he had endowed all things with life, perception, and reason! Stones and plants, air and water, are most useful things, and would have been much less useful if they had been percipient beings; as the inferior animals would have been both less useful and less happy, if they had been rational. Their existence, therefore, and their natures, are proofs of the divine goodness and wisdom, instead of being arguments against it.

28. In the course of providence a vast number of events and objects may be employed to accomplish one great end; and it is impossible for us to pronounce reasonably of any one event, or object, that it is useless, or improper, unless we know its tendency and connection with other things, both past and future; which, in cases innumerable, we cannot do. That, therefore, may be a most wise and beneficent dispensation, which to a captious mind and fallible judgment may appear the contrary.

Even in this world Providence often brings good out of evil, and every man of observation must have perceived that certain events of his life, which when they happened seemed to be great misfortunes, have been found to be great blessings in the end. ~

[Dr. John Dick's Lectures, vol. i. pp. 160-176; Beattie's Elements; Stewart's Works, vol. v.]



13. The province and use of the science of Natural Theology?
14. What remark may be made concerning the proofs of the divine existence?
15. The absurdity and folly of Atheism?
16. First argument produced for the divine existence?
17. The atheist, being compelled to concede that something has existed from eternity, what false supposition does he adopt?
18. Is it consonant to reason to regard the universe as an eternal existence?
19. What do the atheists mean when they affirm that the universe proceeds from chance?
20. On what is the second argument for the existence of Deity founded?
21. Refuge of the atheist when pressed with this argument?
22. If any one should deny that there are marks of design in the works of God, what would it be just to say in reply?
23. What are a few of the numberless objects that indicate design, contrivance, skill, and wisdom in their author?
24. Marks of design in the bodies of the inferior animals?
25. Examples of comprehensive wisdom?
26. What may be said of the variety amid uniformity?
27. Is it not true that there are in the universe many marks of irregularity and want of design, as well as of regularity and wisdom; and does not this prove that the being who made all things is not perfectly, or at all times, wise and good?
28. What other view is to be taken of apparent irregularities and defects in the works of creation?

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## CHAPTER II.

### OF THE DIVINE ATTRIBUTES.

29. WHEN we ascribe to God every good quality that we can conceive, and consider Him as possessed of them all in infinite perfection, and as free from every imperfection, we form the best idea of Him that we can; but it must fall infinitely short of the truth.

30. The attributes of Deity have been distributed into three classes, the Natural, the Intellectual, and the Moral.

The *Natural attributes* are, Unity, Self-existence, Spirituality, Omnipotence, Immutability, Eternity:

The *Intellectual* are, Knowledge and Wisdom:

The *Moral* are, Justice, Goodness, Mercy, Holiness.

#### *Unity of God.*

31. That God exists, has been proved already. That there are more gods than one, we have no evidence, and therefore cannot rationally believe. Nay, even from the light of nature, we have evidence that there is one only.

(1.) It is reckoned a fundamental rule in philosophy, not to suppose more causes than are necessary to produce the effect. This principle conducts us to the unity of Deity; for the necessity of finding an adequate efficient cause does not compel us to have recourse to a plurality of gods. The power that was equal to the creation of a part was equal to the creation of the whole.

(2.) The uniformity of plan that pervades the system indicates unity of counsel, at least, in its formation. We can trace unity of plan in the great fabric of the universe, so far as we are capable of observing it. The law of gravitation prevails throughout the solar system. All the bodies in that system seem to revolve on their own axes: all the planets move in the same direction in the zodiac. The light of the fixed stars affects the eye in the same way as that of the sun, and it travels at the same rate, as we learn from the delicate discovery of their aberration. On descending to our earth we find a similar uniformity prevailing, and can easily trace the harmonious combination of many great parts in one magnificent whole. See Fergus on Nature and Revelation. Book III.

The different parts of nature are admirably adjusted to each other. The relations between the different parts of the system; between the sun, the earth, the air, and the ocean; between the animate and inanimate parts of creation, direct us to one powerful Creator. From this unity of plan we may fairly infer the unity of Deity.

32. The wisest men in the heathen world, though they worshiped inferior *deities* (or rather *names which they substituted for deities*), did yet seem to acknowledge one supreme God, the greatest and best of beings, the father of gods and men. It is probable that belief in one God was the original belief of mankind with respect to Deity; but partly from their narrow views, which made them think that one being could not, without subordinate agents, superintend all things; partly from their flattery to living great men, and gratitude to the dead, disposing them to pay divine honors to human creatures; partly from fanciful analogies between the divine providence and earthly governments; and partly from the figures of poetry, by which they saw the attributes of the Deity personified, they soon corrupted the original belief, and fell into Polytheism and idolatry. And no ancient people ever retained

long their belief in the one true God, except the Jews, who were enlightened by revelation ; and even they were frequently inclined to adopt the superstitions of their neighbors. We see then that in order to ascertain, and fix men's notions of the divine unity, revelation seems to be necessary.

*Self-existence and Independence of Deity.*

33. If God depended on anything, that thing would be superior and prior to him, which is absurd ; because he is himself the supreme and the first cause : therefore his existence does not depend on anything whatever.

*Spirituality of God.*

34. (1.) He is a living being, but matter is not. Life is the peculiar attribute of spirit.

(2.) He is an intelligent being, as we collect from the appearances of design in his works : but knowledge is an attribute of mind or spirit. There is nothing in the properties of matter which is allied to thought or feeling. It is not the eye which sees, nor the ear which hears, but the soul. Matter being incapable of intelligence, all the proofs of wisdom in the universe are at the same time proofs that the divine essence is spiritual.

(3.) God is an active being. He is the first cause of all things which exist. We are conscious of the activity of our own spirits ; and we observe that matter is essentially inactive. It moves, or stops moving, only by impulse, or influence of a foreign agent or body. Power belongs to God, as we know from its effects ; and it belongs to him because he is a spirit.

*Omnipotence of Deity.*

35. In order to be satisfied that God is omnipotent, we need only to look around upon the wonders of creation. To produce such astonishing effects as we see in the universe, and experience in our own frame ; and to produce them out of nothing, and sustain them in the most perfect regularity, must certainly be the effect of power which is able to do all things, and which, therefore, nothing can resist.

The omnipotence of God is displayed in the preservation of all things, which has been called a continual crea-

tion; for as their existence is dependent, it is prolonged from moment to moment by the same power which created them at first. Some seem to speak, as if *having been once made, they had the ground or reason of their being in themselves, continued without the immediate interference of their Creator*, and could only cease to be by a positive act of his will. They insinuate that it would imply imperfection if they needed his constant care, and remind us of the works of man, which do not fall to pieces when the hand of the artist is withdrawn. But between the two cases there is no analogy. The works of man are not dependent on him for their existence, but for their form: the materials of which they are composed subsist, and even the order in which they are arranged is maintained by the laws of nature. A creature can no more preserve, than it can make itself.

When we reflect upon the movements which are going on among the immense celestial bodies, how stupendous seems the power by which they are conducted! Our earth, almost eight thousand miles in diameter, travels about fifteen hundred thousand miles in a day; and at the same time it is spinning on its own axis, and turning up successively the vegetables and animals which it nurses on its bosom, to the genial influence of the solar rays. And, with this inconceivable rapidity, how unceasing, steady, and uniform are its motions. The same holds in the other planets, some of them vastly larger than our globe. Each of them regularly and steadily performs its revolutions.

We say that matter is inert; that if at rest it will continue at rest, and if in motion it will continue in motion. But in stating this fact we have not accounted for it by calling it a law of nature. Why does a body continue in motion? It is not owing to its own activity, but to the energy of the Creator's will. This gave the first impulse, and this holds on its course for ages.

But the divine power cannot extend to what is either impossible in itself, or unsuitable to the perfection of his nature. To make the same thing to be and not to be at the same time is impossible; and to act inconsistently with justice, goodness, and wisdom, must be equally impossible to a being of infinite purity.



*Eternity and Immutability of God.*

36. That God is from everlasting to everlasting, is evident from his being self-existent and almighty. That he was from all eternity, has been proved already; and it can admit of no doubt, that what is independent and omnipotent must continue to all eternity; for it is incapable of being changed by anything else; and that which is infinitely wise and good can never be supposed to make any change in itself.

Moreover, that which exists by necessity of nature, by the same necessity exists as it is, and cannot be otherwise.

*Knowledge and Wisdom of Deity.*

37. As God is the maker and preserver of all things, and is everywhere present (for to suppose him to be in some places only, and not in all, would be to suppose him a limited and imperfect being), his knowledge must be infinite, and comprehend at all times, whatever is, or was, or shall be. Were his knowledge progressive, like ours, it would be imperfect; for they who become more wise must formerly have been less so.

Wisdom is the right exercise of knowledge: and that he is infinitely wise is proved incontestably by the same arguments that prove his existence.

The celebrated Linnæus always testified in his conversation, writings, and actions, the greatest sense of God's omniscience: and so strongly impressed was he with the idea of it, that he wrote over the door of his library, "Innocui vivite, numen adest,"—"Live innocent, God is at hand."

*Goodness of Deity.*

38. The goodness of God is clearly deducible from the act of creation. We can conceive no other reason for the exertion of his power in giving life to so many orders of creatures, and fitting up the earth to be a convenient habitation for them.

This argument consists of two parts: the formation of sensitive beings capable of happiness, and the adaptation of the circumstances in which they are placed to promote it.

Dr. Paley rests the proof of the divine goodness on the two following propositions:

(1.) That in a vast plurality of instances in which contrivance is perceivable, the design of the contrivance is beneficial.

(2.) That the Deity has superadded pleasure to animal sensations, beyond what was necessary for any other purpose; or when the purpose, so far as it was necessary, might have been effected by the operation of pain.

Other writers have mentioned the following circumstances as illustrative of the divine goodness.

Nothing is wanting to living creatures which is necessary for the preservation of life, for defence, the procuring of food, and motion from place to place.

He who bestowed life has rendered it a gift worthy of himself by associating with it a great variety of conveniences and pleasures, instead of pains.

The goodness of God is displayed in the abundant provision which he has made for the wants of his creatures. Also, in providing means for healing wounds and curing diseases.

\* \* \* Nature teaches us of God,  
Her architect—her master. At His feet  
She crouches, and in offering him her praise  
From myriad altars, and in myriad tones,  
She bids man praise Him also. In the broad  
Magnificent ocean, surging in wild foam,  
Yet bounded in its madness; in the fierce,  
Shrieking, and howling tempest, crashing on  
In desolating wrath, yet curb'd with reins,  
She shows His awful power, yet tender care.  
In the free sunlight, in the dropping clouds—  
And changes of the seasons, she proclaims  
His boundless goodness and exhaustless love.

A. B. STREET.

The *existence of natural and moral evils* in the world may be satisfactorily explained, without calling in question the divine goodness. There are numerous advantages and compensations which reason discovers in connection with these evils: but divine revelation is necessary to furnish a full explanation of them in consistency with divine goodness. Upon this subject may be consulted Paley's *Natural Theology*, Fergus on *Nature and Revelation*, and *Lectures of Dr. Dick*.

### *Justice of God.*

39. Justice is necessary to the formation of every good character; and therefore the Deity must be perfectly

just. If we follow the guidance of unsophisticated reason, it will lead us to the same conclusion with the Scriptures, that God is just, as well as wise and good ; that he is not only the maker and preserver, but also the ruler of the world ; and that as power and wisdom are requisite to guide and sustain inanimate matter, and irrational creatures, so justice is indispensable to the government of intelligent and moral agents, who are the proper subjects of law, and may deserve to be rewarded or punished.

The consciences of men bear testimony to the justice of God, even where divine revelation is not enjoyed. Hence a belief of the divine justice has prevailed among all nations in every age. Under the influence of conscience they have understood certain events as instances of retributive justice, and remarked the punishment of individuals in the calamities that befell them. Their histories abound in facts which were construed to be divine judgments, interpositions of the gods to avenge themselves upon those who were guilty of fraud, murder, and impiety. They erred in attributing these acts of justice to beings who existed only in their own vain imaginations ; but they were right in interpreting them as proofs that there is a moral government which will not permit crimes to escape with impunity.

Further proofs of divine justice will be submitted in another chapter.

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29. Is it in our power to form a complete conception of the divine nature ?

30. How have the attributes of Deity been distributed ?

31. What reason have we for believing the unity of God ?

32. How then can we account for the prevalence of Polytheism ?

33. How does reason ascertain the self-existence of God ?

34. What ground does nature furnish for the belief that God is a spirit ?

35. Evidence that God is omnipotent ?

36. How does it appear that God is eternal and unchangeable ?

37. Proof of the divine knowledge, wisdom, and omnipresence ?

38. How do we learn the goodness of God ?

39. What information does nature afford us of the justice of God ?

## CHAPTER III.

EVIDENCES OF THE MORAL GOVERNMENT OF THE  
DEITY FROM THE LIGHT OF NATURE.

40. THE constitution of human nature, and the state of the world, are the only sources from which unassisted reason can discover the character of the divine government.

I. *Evidences of a Moral Government from the Constitution of Human Nature.*

41. (1.) *The distribution of pleasure and pain in the mind of man is a moral distribution.* Those affections which we denominate virtuous are attended with immediate pleasure; the opposite affections and conduct, with immediate pain. The man who acts under the influence of benevolence, gratitude, a regard to justice and truth, is in a state of enjoyment. The heart which is actuated by resentment or malice is a stranger to joy. This is one specimen of moral government.

(2.) *The Creator has implanted a faculty in the human mind which approves of virtue and condemns vice.* It is not enough to say that righteousness is prudent because it is attended with pleasure; that wickedness is foolish, because it is attended with pain. Conscience, in judging of them, pronounces the one to be right, and the other to be wrong.

The righteous, supported by that most delightful of all sentiments, the sense that he is doing his duty, proceeds with self-approbation, and reflects upon his conduct with complacency; the wicked not only is distracted by the conflict of various wretched passions, but acts under the perpetual conviction that he is doing what he ought not to do. The hurry of business, or the tumult of passion, may, for a season, so far drown the voice of conscience as to leave him at liberty to accomplish his purpose. But when his mind is cool, he perceives that, in following blindly the impulse of appetite, he has acted beneath the dignity of his rational nature. The indulgence of



malevolent affections is punished by the sentiment of remorse, and he despises himself for every act of baseness.

(3.) *Conscience, anticipating the future consequences of human actions*, forebodes that it shall be well with the righteous, and ill with the wicked.

The *righteous* man, although naturally modest and unassuming, not only enjoys present serenity, but *looks forward with good hope*. The prospect of future ease lightens every burden, and the view of distant scenes of happiness and joy holds up his head in the time of adversity.

*But every crime is accompanied with a sense of deserved punishment.* To the man who has disregarded the admonitions of conscience, she soon begins to utter her dreadful presages: she lays open to his view the dismal scenes which lie beyond every unlawful pursuit; and sometimes, awaking with increased fury, she produces horrors that constitute a degree of wretchedness, in comparison of which all the sufferings of life do not deserve to be mentioned.

42. The constitution of human nature being the work of God, the three particulars which have been mentioned as parts of that constitution are *parts of his government*.

(1.) The pleasure which accompanies one set of affections, and the pain which accompanies the opposite, afford an instance in the government of God of virtue being rewarded, and of vice being punished.

(2.) The faculty which passes sentence upon human actions is a declaration from the Author of our nature of that conduct which is agreeable to him, because it is a rule directing his creatures to pursue a certain line of conduct.

(3.) The presentiment of the future consequences of our behavior is a declaration, from the Author of our nature, of the manner in which his government is to proceed with regard to us. The hopes and fears natural to the human mind are the language in which God foretells to man the events in which he is deeply interested.

To suppose that the Almighty engages his creatures in a certain course of action by delusive hopes and fears, is at once absurd and impious; and if we think worthily of the Supreme Being, we cannot entertain a doubt that He, who by the constitution of human nature has declared his

love of virtue and his hatred of vice, will at length appear the righteous Governor of the Universe.

When, spite of conscience, pleasure is pursued,  
 Man's nature is unnaturally pleased :  
 And what's unnatural is painful too,  
 At intervals, and must disgust e'en thee !  
 The fact thou know'st ; but not, perhaps, the cause.  
 Virtue's foundations with the world's were laid ;  
 Heav'n mixed her with our make, and twisted close  
 Her sacred int'rests with the strings of life.

YOUNG.

## II. *What unassisted Reason may discover of the Character of the Government of God, from the state of the World.*

43. Here also we may observe three traces of a moral government.

(1.) It recurs, to consider the world as the situation in which creatures, having the constitution which has been described, are placed.

Acting in the presence of men, that is, of creatures constituted as we ourselves are, and feeling a connection with them in all the occupations of life, *we experience in the sentiments of those around us, a further reward and punishment than that which arises from the sense of our own minds.*

The faculty which passes sentence upon a man's own actions, when carried forth to the actions of others, becomes a principle of esteem or contempt. The sense of good or ill-desert becomes, upon the review of the conduct of others, applause or indignation. When it referred to a man's own conduct, it pointed only at what was future. When it refers to the conduct of others, it becomes an active principle, and proceeds in some measure to execute the rules which it pronounces to be just.

Hence the righteous man is rewarded by the sentiments of his fellow-creatures. He experiences the gratitude of some, and the friendship, at least the good-will, of all. The wicked man, on the other hand, is a stranger to esteem, and confidence, and love. His vices expose him to censure ; his deceit renders him an object of distrust ; his malice creates him enemies. According to the kind and the degree of his demerit, contempt, or hatred, or indignation is felt by every one who knows his character ; and even when these sentiments do not lead others to do

him harm, they weaken or extinguish the emotions of sympathy, so that his neighbors do not rejoice in his prosperity, and hardly weep over his misfortunes.

Thus does God employ the general sense of mankind to encourage and reward the righteous; to correct and punish the wicked. Thus has He constituted men, in some sort, the keepers of their brethren, the guardians of one another's virtue. The natural, unperverted sentiments of the human mind, with regard to character and conduct, are upon the side of virtue and against vice; and the course of the world, turning in a great measure upon these sentiments, indicates a moral government.

(2.) *A second trace, in the state of the world, of the moral government of God, is the civil government by which society subsists.*

Those who are employed in administering civil government, are not supposed to act immediately from sentiment. It is expected that without regard to their own private emotions, they shall in every case proceed according to certain known and established laws. But these laws, so far as they go, are in general consonant to the sentiments of the human mind, and, like them, are favorable to the cause of virtue.

The happiness, the existence of human government depends upon the protection and encouragement which it affords to virtue, and the punishment which it inflicts upon vice. The government of men therefore, in its best and happiest form, is a moral government; and being a part, an instrument of the government of God, it serves to intimate to us the rule according to which his providence operates through the general system.

(3.) *Setting aside all consideration of the opinions of the instrumentality of man, there appear in the world evident traces of the moral government of God.*

Many of the consequences of men's behavior happen without the intervention of any agent. Of this kind, are the effects which their way of life has upon their health, and much of its influence upon their fortune and situation.

Effects of the same nature extend to communities of men.

Communities derive strength and stability from the truthfulness, moderation, temperance, and public spirit of the members; whereas idleness, luxury, and turbulence,

while they ruin the private fortunes of many individuals, are hurtful to the community; and the general depravity of the members is the disease and weakness of the state.

44. These effects upon communities of different courses of private conduct are not a part of the political regulations which are made with different degrees of wisdom in different states; but they may be observed in all countries. They are a part of what we commonly call *the course of nature*; that is, they are rewards and punishments ordained by the Lord of nature, not affected by the caprice of his subjects, and flowing immediately from the conduct of men.

45. That obstructions do arise to the full operation of these rewards and punishments, must be admitted; yet the degree in which they actually take place is sufficient to ascertain the character of the government of God.

In those cases where we are able to trace the causes which prevent the exact distribution of good and evil, we perceive that the very hindrances are wisely adapted to the present state. Even when we do not discern the reasons of their existence, we clearly perceive that these hindrances are accidental; that virtue, benign and salutary in its influences, tends to produce happiness, pure and unmixed; that vice, in its nature mischievous, tends to confusion and misery.

Now we cannot avoid considering these tendencies as the voice of Him who hath established the order of nature, declaring to those who observe and understand them, the future condition of the righteous and the wicked.

And thus, in the world, we behold upon every hand of us openings of a kingdom of righteousness corresponding to what we previously traced in the constitution of human nature. By that constitution, while reward is provided for virtue and punishment for vice, there arise in our breast the forebodings of a higher reward and a higher punishment. So, in the world, while there are manifold instances of a righteous distribution of good and evil, there is a tendency toward a completion of a scheme which is here but begun.

46. It may be objected, that the distribution of rewards and punishments is not regular, and that upon the whole, the treatment which men experience from providence is little connected with their character and conduct. The



prosperity of the wicked and the afflictions of the righteous, have in all ages been a topic of declamation. But even the occasional instances of retribution which we witness, are hints and notices that justice is concerned in the actions of men, and are calculated to excite an expectation, that at some period it will be more openly revealed. As we cannot doubt from what we see, that justice is one of the attributes of the supreme Governor, the conclusion to which we are naturally led is, that there are reasons why he does not now more fully display it, and that when these reasons have ceased, or in another state where a new order of things will exist, an exact distribution will take place, and every man will be recompensed according to his works.

[Dick's Lectures, vol. i. p. 261.]

47. The sacred scriptures are the best expositors of the divine government. All our disquisitions concerning the nature of that government only prepare us for receiving those gracious discoveries, which, confirming every conclusion of right reason, resolving every doubt, and enlarging the imperfect views which belong to this the beginning of our existence, bring us perfect assurance that, in the course of the divine government, unlimited in extent, in duration, and in power, every hindrance shall be removed, the natural consequences of action shall be allowed to operate, virtue shall be happy, and vice shall be miserable.

[Lectures of Dr. George Hill ; Butler's Analogy ; D. Stewart's Works, vol. v. 360-5.]

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40. Evidences of moral government independently of divine revelation ?

41. Evidences from the constitution of human nature ?

42. Nature of the argument derived from these three particulars ?

43. What may unassisted reason discover of the character of the government of God from the state of the world ?

44. Do not these effects upon communities of different courses of private conduct arise from civil regulations ?

45. But from the present situation of human affairs, do there not arise many obstructions to the full operation of these rewards and punishments ?

46. What objection may here be noticed ?

47. From what source do we derive a more perfect view of the moral government of God ?

## B

## CHAPTER IV.

## ON PROVIDENCE.

48. PROVIDENCE is the action or conduct of God in upholding by his power the universe which he has created, and of regulating all beings and events in it by his wisdom. It is the care which God takes of all things, to uphold them in being, and to direct them to the ends which he has determined to accomplish by them, so that nothing takes place in which he is not concerned in a manner worthy of his perfections, and which is not in unison with the counsel of his own will.

49. (1.) The first argument in proof of such a providence is drawn from the acknowledged perfections of God. As these prove that he is qualified to undertake the management of his creatures and all their affairs, so they furnish sure ground for the conclusion, that he has not dismissed them from his care.

For instance: omniscience brings before him the minutest object as well as the greatest, and the most secret as well as open actions; his power is as unlimited as his knowledge, and can act equally well and with equal ease upon any and every part of the universe; his wisdom and goodness are also unlimited, and fully qualify and dispose him to exert the providence that has been asserted; his justice also requires him to exercise a moral government over his intelligent creatures, and of course to observe and control their actions.

(2.) A second argument is founded on the dependent nature of creatures. Unlike God, they have no ground of existence in themselves; they cannot of course by their own will or power prolong it a moment; it depends on the will and power of God every successive moment, and this is the doctrine of Scripture.

(3.) A third argument is founded on the order which is maintained in the universe. When we contemplate this immense system, so wonderful in its contrivances, so constant in its movements, so admirably balanced, and proceeding from age to age without the slightest confusion,

can any rational man suppose that there is no presiding mind by which it is governed? The evidence is particularly strong to those who are more intimately acquainted with nature, and know that, in the motions of some of the heavenly bodies, there are occasionally apparent irregularities, but that means are provided for correcting them, so that they return to their proper place.

50. To this reasoning it is objected, that the order which prevails throughout the universe, may be accounted for by the *laws of nature*, without an immediate interposition of the Deity, and proves only the wisdom of its original constitution.

But what is the true meaning of a law of nature as applied to inanimate things? It signifies merely the stated, regular order in which they are found to subsist. Matter can neither put itself in motion, nor stop itself when in motion; and every modification which it undergoes is the effect of some external power. What then are laws of nature? They are the particular modes in which the Deity exerts his power, which, being uniform, are accounted natural, while any deviation from them is pronounced to be miraculous. If this be a just description of them, and none can dispute it, it follows that they are so far from accounting for the order which is maintained in the universe, that they necessarily imply the actual and constant interposition of the Creator, and as irresistibly suggest the idea of a lawgiver, as do the laws of any human society. The truth is, that the laws of nature, if understood to be different from the operations of the Deity, are a name, and nothing more, with which simpletons may be amused; but certainly no man of common sense, who is inquiring into the cause of the stability of the universe, will deem it satisfactory to be answered with a sound.

For some other arguments, refer to what is advanced in the last chapter in proof of the moral government of God, which implies the doctrine and the fact of providence.

51. These arguments prove not merely a general superintendence of the affairs of the universe, but a *particular care exercised toward every constituent part of it*.

Some maintain only a general providence, which consists in upholding certain general laws, and exclaim against the idea of a particular providence which takes a

concern in individuals and their affairs. It is strange that the latter opinion should be adopted by any person who professes to bow to the authority of Scripture—which declares that a sparrow does not fall to the ground without the knowledge of our heavenly Father, and that the hairs of our heads are all numbered; or by any man who has calmly listened to the dictates of reason.

If God has certain designs to accomplish with respect to, or by means of men, how can his intention be fulfilled without particular attention to their circumstances, their movements, and all the events of their life? “There is no argument for a general (says H. More), but is also an argument for a particular providence, unless we can prove that the whole is not made up of parts; that generals are not composed of particulars; that nations are not compounded of families; that societies are not formed of individuals; that chains are not composed of links; that sums are not made up of units; that the interests of a community do not grow out of the well-being of its members.”

52. It is again objected, that a particular providence is inconsistent with the liberty of man, and with the general laws which divine wisdom has established.

To this objection it is sufficient to reply, that God, having a perfect knowledge of the laws of nature, and of the operations of the human mind, and having the power of influencing the train of ideas in the mind of man, is undoubtedly able to direct his conduct without suspending, or interfering with the general laws of nature, or with the freedom of the human mind.

[Prof. Dick's Lectures on Providence.]

48. What is meant by the providence of God?

49. What are some of the arguments in proof of such a providence?

50. What objection is usually brought against the third argument for a particular providence?

51. Do these arguments prove a particular, or only a general providence?

52. What other strong objection is advanced against the doctrine of a particular providence?



## BOOK II.

THE ACTIVE AND MORAL POWERS OF MAN, AND  
REMARKS UPON THEIR DUE REGULATION.

## CHAPTER I.

GENERAL PRELIMINARY VIEW OF THE CHARACTER AND  
CONDITION OF MAN.

53. I. THE characteristics by which man is distinguished from the other inhabitants of this world are two: *he is rational, and immortal.*

54. While the inferior animals are under the guidance of instinct, he is endowed with nobler principles.

Beside appetites, which he has in common with the brutes, he is dignified with intellectual, active, and moral powers, which they do not possess. Reason, memory, and imagination; desires, affections, and a moral faculty, are wonderfully combined in his nature, and form a singular and interesting being.

He can observe, compare, and judge; he can vary his means, and suit his operations to the circumstances in which he is placed. He can turn in upon himself, and trace the operations of his own mind. He can survey the vast system of the universe; discover the laws by which it is governed; and learn the attributes of the Creator and Governor, from the works of his hand. He can surround himself by a new creation, and combine in endless variety the objects with which he is acquainted. He remembers the past; and the lessons of experience not only furnish him with instructions for the regulation of his present conduct, but also enable him to anticipate what he may expect from the future.

He hopes, and he fears; he loves, and desires, and pursues; he dreads, and he shuns. His moral faculty indicates the path of duty, and it applauds or condemns. His intellectual, active, and moral powers are finely ad-

justed to each other, and form a being capable of much present enjoyment, and of vast improvement in intellectual and moral excellence.

How absurd is it to allege that undesigning chance produced such an intelligent and contriving being as Man!

## II.—*Arguments for the Immortality of Man.*

55. (1.) Our first argument shall be derived from a conviction of our immortality that seems to be implanted in the human mind, and which is confirmed by the voice of nature in her external phenomena.

Oh, listen, man!

A voice within us speaks that startling word,  
 "Man, thou shalt never die." Celestial voices  
 Hymn it unto our souls: according harps,  
 By angel fingers touch'd, when the mild stars  
 Of morning sang together, sound forth still  
 The song of our great immortality:  
 Thick clustering orbs, and this our fair domain,  
 The tall, dark mountains, and the deep-toned seas,  
 Join in this solemn, universal song.  
 Oh, listen, ye, our spirits; drink it in  
 From all the air! 'Tis in the gentle moonlight;  
 'Tis floating mid day's setting glories; Night,  
 Wrapped in her sable robe, with silent step  
 Comes to our bed and breathes it in our ears:  
 Night, and the dawn, bright day, and thoughtful eve,  
 All time, all bounds, the limitless expanse,  
 As one vast mystic instrument, are touch'd  
 By an unseen, living Hand, and conscious chords  
 Quiver with joy in this great jubilee.  
 The dying hear it; and as sounds of earth  
 Grow dull and distant, wake their passing souls  
 To mingle in this heavenly harmony.

R. H. DANA.

A portion of this argument, thus exquisitely set forth by Dana, will be amplified under some of the following heads.

(2.) Bishop Butler, in his *Analogy*, has shown that there is nothing in the circumstances of the death of the body, or in the analogy of nature around us, to render man's future existence improbable. On the contrary, he shows that the analogy of nature makes it probable, that as we are conscious that we are now living agents, so we shall go on to be such, notwithstanding the event of death, which, it is likely, may only serve to bring us into new scenes, and a new state of life and action, just as naturally as we came into the present.

(3.) An argument against the contemporaneous death of the body and soul, and a presumptive argument therefore for the continued existence of the soul, notwithstanding the death of the body, has been formed of this sort: "Man at the age of twenty retains not a particle of the matter in which his mind was invested when he was born. Nevertheless at the age of eighty years, he is conscious of being the same individual he was as far back as his memory can go; that is to say, to the period when he was four or five years old. Whatever it be, therefore, in which this consciousness of identity resides, it cannot consist of a material substance, since it had been destroyed. It is, consequently, an ethereal spirit: as it remains the same throughout all the alterations that take place in the body, it is not dependent on the body for its existence, and it is calculated to survive the ever-changing frame in which it is encased."

(4.) It is argued, that if the present were the only state of human existence, the designs of the Creator, in the formation of man, would not be conformable to the usual operations of his wisdom. The noblest being with which we are acquainted just begins to evolve faculties which are never permitted to arrive at their full vigor, or to display their full beauty. Other animals reach the maturity and utmost limits of their powers. Far otherwise is it with man. He is possessed of many faculties which, in the present life, are never or but partially exerted. This we know to be the case with those who die young, or uninstructed, that is, with the greatest part of mankind: and this is the case in some measure with all.

It seems to be a law pervading sentient beings that they must reach all that perfection, and enjoy all that happiness of which their nature is susceptible: and why should man be considered an exception to that law? But as man's capacity for improvement is not exhausted in this world, there is reason from the analogy of nature to suppose that in a future state his faculties will be fully expanded and attain maturity. Is it not unreasonable also to suppose that a creature endowed with such noble faculties, and capable of such progressive and high improvement should, at once and forever, be arrested in his progress toward perfection?

(5.) It is remarkable that the wisest men in all ages,

and the greatest part of men in all nations, have believed that the soul will survive the body, however some of them may have disfigured this belief by vain and incredible fictions.

Whence could the universal belief of the soul's immortality arise? It is true that all men have believed that the sun and starry heavens revolve about the earth; but this opinion is easily accounted for, being warranted by what seems to be the evidence of sense. It is also true that most nations have, at one time or other, acknowledged a plurality of gods; but this is a corruption of an original true opinion: for it is highly probable—nay, it appears from history—that a belief in one God was the more ancient opinion, and that Polytheism succeeded to it, and was a corruption of it. Now, it is not at all surprising that, when a true opinion is introduced among mankind, it should, in ignorant ages, be perverted by additional and fabulous circumstances.

But the immortality of the soul is not a corruption of an original true opinion, nor does it derive any support from the evidence of sense: it is itself an original opinion, and the testimony of sense seems rather to declare against it. Whence, then, could it arise?

Not from the artifice of priests or of politicians, in order to keep the world in awe, as some have vainly pretended; for there never was a time when all politicians and priests were wise and the rest of mankind fools, nor when they were all of the same opinion and concurred in the same design. It may be added that mankind have never yet adopted any opinion universally, merely upon the authority of politicians, philosophers, or priests.

This opinion, therefore, must have arisen from a natural suggestion of the human understanding, or from a divine revelation communicated to our first parents, and by them transmitted to their posterity. In either case this opinion will be allowed to be of the most respectable authority.

(6.) All men are formed with a natural desire and expectation of immortality. The thought of being reduced into nothing is shocking to a rational soul. These hopes and expectations are not the effect of education; for with a very few exceptions they are found in all ages and countries. Neither do they arise from self-conceit or



pride, but take their rise from the original frame of human nature ; and if so, their author is God himself, and they must be founded in truth. He would not inspire his creatures with hopes and wishes, that have nothing in nature to gratify them.

(7.) The apprehensions of wicked men in regard to the punishments of a future state have equally a foundation in nature. They seem to have been implanted by the Creator, to restrain men from crime in this life, and to operate as a motive to virtue ; and they answer this purpose to a valuable extent.

(8.) Another argument is founded on the unequal distribution of good and evil in the present life. This argument is noticed in a preceding chapter, and needs not to be repeated here.

These and other arguments render highly probable the doctrine of man's future existence after death : but no absolute certainty can be attained respecting it, except by examining the pages of that invaluable communication from God, which has "brought immortality to light ;" not only declaring the fact, but disclosing the circumstances of man's future being, and thus furnishing the most powerful motives to rectitude of conduct in the present life.

So, when the tomb's dull silence finds an end,  
The blessed dead to endless youth shall rise ;  
And hear the archangel's thrilling summons blend  
Its tone with anthems from the upper skies.

There shall the good of earth be found at last,  
Where dazzling streams and vernal fields expand—  
Where Love her crown attains—her trials past—  
And, fill'd with rapture, hails the "better land."

WILLIS G. CLARK.

[Beattie ; Fergus ; S. S. Smith.]

### III.—*Free Agency and Accountability of Man.*

It has been shown in a previous chapter, that man is under a moral government. To fit him for this state he is constituted a free agent. He is endowed with intellectual and active powers ; he has judgment to know the meaning of a commandment, and ability to obey it.

By *moral government*, we understand the establishment and operation of laws for the direction of rational beings, and the enforcing those laws by rewards and punish-

ments. The subject of such a government must be a free agent.

56. By the *liberty of a moral agent*, we understand a power over the determinations of his own will.

Every man has a conviction that he is free, and acts toward others in the persuasion that they also are free. Our deliberations, purposes, and promises, all suppose this liberty in ourselves; and our advices, exhortations, and commands suppose it in others. On this subject philosophers may talk; but consciousness and experience decide. I am *conscious of freedom*. I can weigh motives and desires; I can judge which are most consonant to sound reason, and to my best interest; and yet can decline regulating my conduct by them. I can choose and refuse. I can act agreeably to the convictions of my understanding, or I can pursue a different course. Advice and exhortation may influence conduct, but they do not impair liberty. The same is the case with motives; they may prompt to action, but they do not act.

A necessary agent, whose actions are as irresistibly determined by desires or motives as a stone in falling to the ground is by the great law of gravitation, cannot be the subject of moral government. He is incapable of virtue and vice, and unfit for reward and punishment.

57. Moral responsibility is the subjection of a moral agent, that is, one capable of moral conduct, to rewards and punishments. Moral accountability is the liableness of a subject of law to the approbation or disapprobation of the lawgiver, on the ground of right, equity, and truth.

Man is placed under the precepts and sanctions of law, as has been briefly shown on preceding pages. One of the great characteristics of that law is utility; or, in other words, it prescribes what the Deity, in his boundless wisdom, saw would be best, not merely for one or a few individuals, but for all; best for all if all were to obey it. Abundant proof of this position will be found in the latter part of this volume, in the comments on the Ten Commandments.

58. This law, to some extent, is intimated to us by reason and the moral faculty, and by an observation of the course of nature.

Reason (the faculty by which we distinguish truth from error, and combine means for the attainment of ends),

pondering all the phenomena, instructs us to revere the Deity ; to exercise justice, candor, and mercy toward our fellow-men ; and to cherish temperance, fortitude, and diligence in our several avocations.

But, for the discovery of the great outlines of the will of God and duty of man, we are not left to the exercise of reason alone.

Conscience, or the moral faculty (that by which we distinguish between right and wrong), comes in to the aid of reason ; and by reason and conscience all men may perceive the great features of moral law. Accordingly, there are certain dispositions and actions which have been always applauded or commended, and others which as generally have been the subjects of censure and detestation. All men approve of piety, benevolence, integrity, veracity, temperance, fortitude, industry : all men disapprove of contrary dispositions and conduct. Reason and the moral faculty may be perverted. This perversion however results from the abuse of free agency ; and for it, mankind have themselves to blame.

Man is a free agent ; but his body, his mind, and nature around him, are so constituted, that if he exercise his freedom in an irregular, capricious manner, in defiance of the dictates of reason and conscience, he must suffer a corresponding loss of happiness, or degree of pain.

59. IV. Man, even in his present state, is happy or unhappy, rewarded or punished, as he obeys or disobeys the law. This demonstration of a moral government has been treated in Book I. chap. 3. See also Fergus on Nature and Revelation, Book III. chap. 5.

60. V. Exercise and trial are powerful means of improvement, and sources of happiness. The constitution of nature, and the government of the Creator, are such as to call forth our bodily exertions, and to solicit and encourage the exercise of our intellectual and moral capacities. Under these trials, if we act wisely, we shall make the most rapid progress in improvement. In this progress, the present life soon comes to a close ; but we are immortal beings, and we have reason to think that there is an intimate connection between the present and the future, and that the great scheme, which is evidently going on at present, will be continued in a future state of being.

[Fergus.]

53. Prominent characteristics by which man is honorably distinguished from the other inhabitants of this world?

54. As a rational being, how is he distinguished from other animals?

55. What are some of the arguments by which we satisfy ourselves, independently of revelation, that man is destined to be an immortal being?

56. What do we understand by the liberty of a moral agent?

57. What do we understand by the responsibility and accountability of man?

58. How far is this law intimated to us by reason and the moral faculty; and how far does the course of nature countenance and support it?

59. On what does the happiness of man, in the present state, greatly depend?

60. Of what service to man is the present state of probation and discipline in which he is placed?

## CHAPTER II.

### THE VOLUNTARY PRINCIPLE.

#### SECTION I.—ITS NATURE AND OPERATION.

61. THE voluntary principle is that power of the mind by which it determines to act, or not to act, in those cases which depend on its own determination: the act of the mind in thus determining, is denominated *volition*.

The will must be influenced before any active energy is put forth: it becomes important therefore to ascertain those principles of our nature which, on account of their exerting this influence, have been termed active and moral; and to the operation of which we trace every virtue and every crime, from the deeds of beneficence by which the names of patriots and legislators have been consecrated, to the guilty ambition which treads in blood to the attainment of its object.

62. Those human actions which are performed independently of an act of the will, are termed *involuntary*.

There are others which, because they partake of the nature of voluntary and involuntary actions, are called *mixed*; they are under the power of the will, but are generally performed without it.

*Voluntary* actions may be distinguished from all others by this, that they are done with a view to some object; and proceed from the volitions of a being possessing reason and intelligence; whereas those which result from the principles called instincts, are generally, if not always, per-



formed without any previous conception of them. This remark applies also to things which, though originally done by conscious volition, are afterward performed by habit. Thus we often shut and open our eyes without the consciousness of any such operation.

63. Whatever incites man to act is called a principle of action. It is difficult to give a complete enumeration of the various exciting causes by which all men are influenced. It is to be observed also that the same train of actions may proceed from different principles: and again, actions which seem to spring from one or two principles may actually proceed from many.

[Dewar's Moral Philosophy.]

64. The chief springs of action in the constitution of man are, the appetites; the affections; the desires; the moral faculty, or conscience.

The nature of these we shall briefly set forth, after offering an explanation of the influence of motives.

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61. How may this principle be described?

62. With respect to the will, how are human actions distinguished?

63. What do philosophers mean by a principle of action?

64. What are the chief principles or springs of action, in the constitution of man?

## SECTION II.—INFLUENCE OF MOTIVES.

*Nature of the relation between Volition and the circumstances on which its regularity depends.*

65. THE circumstances in which we are placed, in so far as volition is regulated by them, are usually called *motives*. Motives therefore are not a distinct set of entities (existences), but any kind of entities whatsoever that influence volition. Pleasure, for instance, may be a motive; friendship, or enmity may be a motive; a favorable season may be a motive, an unfavorable season may be a motive; fire, water, snow, and ice, may each be a motive. In short, everything in the universe which the mind can conceive, may become a motive.

66. The relation between motives and volitions may be understood from the following observations:—

(1.) Nothing can be regarded as a motive unless we have some *knowledge* of it.

(2.) Motives do not operate *physically* or *spontaneously*,

or *necessarily*. So far as anything acts physically, it is never styled a motive.

(3.) Motives *do not supersede our own agency*. If an organic impression excite a sensation, or an interesting perception excite an emotion, we are not *active*, but *passive*; we do not *act*, but are *acted upon*. But the case is totally different where motives are concerned. *We ourselves* then act; and motives, instead of destroying, or even impairing our agency, only afford us an opportunity of rightly exerting it. If a person, for instance, give a dollar for the relief of the distressed, the relief is the motive of his gift, but the action is nevertheless *his own*, and his agency in it is not in the slightest degree impaired by its proceeding from a motive.

67. Motives occur on all occasions; and must be of some use. *Their only office*, we suppose, is *to afford knowledge to the understanding*, and thus direct us in the exercise of volition. In reality, if they neither act as physical causes, nor impair our own agency, it is impossible to conceive them to have any other office; and when we look to facts, we find that this is the very office to which they are applied.

A person, for example, informs us that if we pursue a certain line of conduct, we shall experience *good*; that if we pursue another, we shall experience *evil*. In consequence of this *information* we choose the former and avoid the latter, and the information is styled the *motive* of our choice. But nothing seems more evident than that the information does not *act* on our will at all: it merely gives us *passive knowledge*, according to which *we ourselves choose to act*.

A connection certainly exists between motives and the will; but it is not a *physical*—it is merely a *voluntary* connection (some would call it a *moral* one), and is occasioned by the will itself. In other words, man himself chooses to act *according to the knowledge which motives afford*, and thus establishes a connection between them and his choice.

68. It may be said, by way of objection, that motives possess different degrees of power, and their different degrees of power can be nothing but their different degrees of influence on the will.

This objection is easily answered. Motives obtain



from *us* different degrees of *preference*; and it is these degrees of *preference* that constitute what are called their degrees of power. The expressions then, *moral power* and *power of motives*, though convenient, are really a species of *misnomer*, and are to be understood in the manner we have defined.

It appears also from this discussion that the mind, in view of the motive, and not the motive, *begins* the particular results that take place, and consequently, in the strict and proper sense of the expression, is their *source*.

69. Though in the use of volition we are not *restricted* to a particular course of action, it by no means follows that we shall conduct ourselves *contingently* or *at random*. On the contrary, being *intelligent*, as well as *free* agents, we will certainly conduct ourselves according to the circumstances in which we find ourselves placed.

It may be added, that to act *according to* a motive, is merely to perform an action for the attainment or accomplishment of something which the motive presents to us.

[Ballantyne's Examination of the Human Mind.]

70. "External motives are not of such a nature, that volitions of a certain character invariably proceed from them, independently of the nature, and state, and feelings of the mind, which acts in view of them. But if a motive has any influence on the determination of the will, it is *one* of the antecedents on which the volition depends. Yet if it is an external object, it is not the *immediate* antecedent. This is an act or state of the mind. An executive volition must be preceded by an *emotion*. This is an act or state of the mind. Before this emotion can be felt, there must be an *apprehension* of the object. This is also a state of the mind. Apprehension and emotion must both intervene, between the external object and the volition. The object then can have no influence on the volition, except by influencing the mind; in other words, there must be not only a motive, but an agent. The agent does not will without motives; nor do motives will without an agent."

71. "The concurrence of the mind, in giving efficacy to motives, is evident from the fact, that the *same* external object will excite in *different* minds, or even in the *same* mind at different times, very different feelings, and lead to very different choices.

The influence of an external motive (or the action of the mind in view of it) will vary with the state of the mind to which it is presented. And the feelings excited in the mind will vary as the objects before it are changed. If motives and the state of the mind are not *both* concerned, in determining the acts of the will, then they must be determined either by the *mind alone*, so that whatever be the motives presented, its volitions will be the same; or by *motives alone*, so that whatever be the state of mind, the volitions will be the same." [Day on the Will.]

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65. How may the term motives be defined?

66. By what observations will the way be prepared to understand the relation between motives and volition?

67. What then is the office of motives?

68. What objection may be advanced against the view of motives now given?

69. May it not be objected to this doctrine that the mind will thus act at random and contingently?

70. What influence upon our choice is exerted by the state or feelings of the mind?

71. How does it appear that a concurrence of the mind is necessary in giving efficacy to motives?

### SECTION III.—INFLUENCE EXERTED UPON THE WILL, BY KNOWLEDGE, ATTENTION, AND MORAL HABITS.

It is a well-known fact that the will of individuals is influenced differently with the same motives before them. The principles on which this fact can be explained, may be referred to the three heads of Knowledge, Attention, and Moral Habits.

#### (1.) *Influence of Knowledge.*

72. A primary and most essential element in the due regulation of the will is a *correct knowledge of the truths and motives* which tend to influence its determinations.

73. The highest class of these comprehends the *truths of religious belief*—a series of moral causes, the tendencies of which are of the most important kind, and calculated to exert a uniform influence upon every man who surrenders himself to their guidance.

74. The sacred writers speak in the strongest terms of the guilt attached to voluntary ignorance; and this guilt must be evident to every one who considers the clearness with which the highest truths are disclosed, and the in-

controvertible evidence by which they are supported. This remark applies equally to the principles, both of natural and of revealed religion.

75. The important truths of natural religion are partly matters of the most simple induction from the phenomena of nature which are continually before us, and partly impressed upon our own moral constitution in the clearest manner.

From these two sources may be gained a knowledge, to some valuable extent, of the character of the Creator, and of our relation to him as moral beings; and the man is left entirely without excuse who fails to direct to them his most earnest attention, and to make the impressions derived from them the habitual rule of his volitions, and the guide of his whole character.

76. The truths of revealed religion are supported by a weight of miraculous evidence, and are transmitted to us by a chain of testimony, carrying absolute conviction to the mind of every candid inquirer. They are further confirmed by probability and a force of internal evidence, which fix themselves upon the moral feelings of every sound mind with irresistible power.

The whole is addressed to us as rational beings; it is pressed upon our attention as creatures destined for another state of existence; and the duty is imposed upon every individual seriously to examine and to consider.

77. Every man is in the highest degree responsible for the care with which he has informed himself of these evidences, and for the attention with which he has given to every part of them its due weight in the solemn inquiry.

He is further responsible for the influence of any previously formed prejudice, or any degree of that vitiated state of his moral feelings, which prevents him from approaching the subject with the simplicity of an uncontaminated mind.

## (2.) *Influence of Attention.*

78. Next to the acquisition of that knowledge which is adapted best to act upon us as moral beings, is the important rule of habitually attending to it, when acquired, so as to bring its influence to bear upon our volitions.

79. Such attention is a voluntary act; for when a par-

ticular desire is present to a person's mind, he has the power to act upon the first impulse, or upon a very partial and limited, perhaps a distorted, view of the considerations and motives by which he ought to be influenced; and he has the power to suspend acting, and direct his attention deliberately and fully to the facts and principles which are calculated to guide his determination. This is the first great step in that chain of sequences which belong to the regulation of the will; and the power to take this step constitutes man a free and responsible agent.

80. When the desire or inclination is suffered to engross the mind and occupy fully the attention; when the power is not exercised of directing it to moral causes and motives, and of comparing with them the inclination which is present, the consequence may be that the man runs heedlessly into volition and action, from which the due exercise of this process of mind might have preserved him.

81. The moral causes may be so far attended to as to prevent the inclination from being followed by action; while the inclination is still cherished, and the mind is allowed to dwell with a certain feeling of regret on the object which it had been obliged to deny itself.

Though the actual deed be thus prevented, the *harmony of the moral feelings is destroyed*; for this consists in the desires and affections, as well as conduct, being in strict subjection to the indications of an enlightened conscience, and the principles of moral rectitude. The inclination, thus cherished, gradually acquires greater ascendancy over the moral feelings; the attention is less and less directed to the moral truths and motives which are opposed to it; the inclination at length acquires the predominance, and is followed by volition. This is to be carried away by passion. This is vice. In the whole of this course each movement of the mind is felt to be entirely voluntary.

Moral causes, in this manner, gradually lose their power over the volitions or determinations of the mind; and at a certain period of this progress, the judgment itself comes to be changed respecting the moral aspect of the deed.

82. There is still another mental condition, in which the harmony of the moral feelings may be destroyed, without the action following.

This takes place when the inclination is cherished, as



in the former case, in opposition to the indications of conscience, while the action is opposed by some inferior motives—as a regard to reputation or interest; a regard to health or character.

83. The deed may thus be prevented, and the interests of society may receive benefit from the difference; but, so far as regards the individual himself, the disruption of moral harmony is the same; and his moral aspect must be similar in the eye of the Almighty One; for by this conduct, merely one selfish feeling is balanced by another.

[Abercrombie.]

[See Chapter V. for further remarks upon the will, and upon the uniformity of moral causes.]

### (3.) *Formation and Influence of Moral Habits.*

84. A moral habit is a mental condition, in which a desire, or an affection, repeatedly acted on, is, after each repetition, acted upon with less and less effort; and, on the other hand, a truth or moral principle, which has been repeatedly passed over without adequate attention, after every such act makes less and less impression, until at length it ceases to exert any influence over the moral feelings or the conduct.

85. Habits of vice are formed in the following manner. At first a vicious deed requires an effort, and a powerful contest with moral principles; and it is speedily followed by that feeling of regret to which superficial observers give the name of repentance. This is the voice of conscience; but its power is more and more diminished after each repetition of the deed; even the judgment becomes perverted respecting the first great principles of moral rectitude; and acts which at first occasioned a violent conflict are gone into without remorse, or almost without perception of their moral aspect.

A man in this situation may still retain the knowledge of truths and principles which at one time exerted an influence over his conduct; but they are now matters of memory alone. Their power as moral causes is gone; they are viewed perhaps as superstitions of the vulgar, or the prejudices of a contracted education—whereas such a conception of them is only proof of the increasing moral degradation and danger of the one who indulges it.

86. The principle of habit applies to any species of



conduct, or any train of mental operations, which, by frequent repetition, has become so familiar as not to be accompanied by a recognition of the principles from which they originally sprung.

In this manner good habits are continued without any immediate sense of the right principles by which they were formed ; but they arose from a frequent and uniform acting upon these principles ; and on this is founded the moral approbation which we attach to habits of this description.

In the same manner habits of vice, and habits of inattention to any class of duties, are perpetuated without a sense of the principles and affections which they violate ; but this arose from a frequent violation of these principles, and a frequent repulsion of these affections until they gradually lost their power over the conduct ; and in this consists the guilt of vicious habits.

87. Character consists in a great measure in habits ; and habits arise out of individual actions, and individual operations of the mind.

88. Hence may be learned the importance of carefully weighing every action of our lives, and every train of thought that we encourage in our minds ; for we never can determine the effect of a single act, or a single mental process, in giving that influence to the character, or to the moral condition, the result of which shall be decisive and permanent. Hence, in an important sense, every man becomes the master of his own moral destiny.

89. When the judgment, influenced by the indications of conscience, is convinced of the injurious nature of the habit, the attention must be steadily and habitually directed to this impression. There will thus arise a desire to be delivered from the habit ; or, in other words, to cultivate the course of action that is opposed to it.

This desire, being cherished in the mind, is then made to bear upon every individual case in which a propensity is felt toward particular actions ; at first with difficulty, but, after every instance of success, less effort is required, until at length the new course of action is confirmed, and overpowers the habit to which it was opposed.

But that this result may take place, it is necessary that the mental process be followed that has been referred to ;

for bad habits may be long suspended by some powerful extrinsic influence, while they are in no degree broken.

90. The mind often sinks into a state of vicious habit, in which there is such a disruption of its moral harmony, that no power appears in the mind itself capable of restoring it to a mental condition. This has been noticed even by heathen philosophers. In such a wretched state, either the evil is to be regarded as hopeless, or aid is to be acquired from some foreign source.

91. We are thus led to notice the adaptation and the probability of the *provisions of Christianity*, where an influence is indeed disclosed to us, capable of restoring the harmony that has been lost, and of raising man anew to his proper place as a moral being.

92. We cannot hesitate to believe that the Power who framed the wondrous fabric may condescend to hold intercourse with it for the purpose of redeeming it from moral disorder and ruin. It accords with our best conceptions of the benevolence of Deity, that he should thus look upon his creatures in the hour of need; and the system disclosing such communication appears, upon every principle of sound philosophy, to be one of harmony, consistency, and truth.

93. This course of remark directs our attention to that inward change, so often the scoff of the profane, but to which so prominent a place is assigned in the sacred writings, in which a man is said to be created anew by a power from heaven, and elevated in his whole views and feelings as a moral being.

94. Sound philosophy teaches us, that there is a state in which nothing less than such a complete transformation can restore the man to a healthy moral condition, and that, for producing it, nothing will avail but an influence from without the mind—a might and a power from the same Almighty One that originally framed it. Philosophy teaches, in the clearest manner, that a portion of mankind require such a transformation; Christianity informs us that it is required by all. And who, that places himself in the presence of a being of Infinite Purity, will say he requires not such a change?

95. This needful aid from Deity may be looked for only when it is sought under a deep conviction of its

necessity; and when the most serious attention is rendered to those moral truths that are adapted to operate favorably upon the habits and character; and when the will is surrendered to the suggestions of conscience.

It is to be looked for only in connection with, and in furtherance of, our own most vigorous exertions as rational and moral beings to secure moral harmony in our mental operations and conduct.

96. From every occurrence in life we should take occasion to practice some virtue, and cherish some good habit. Few occurrences are so uninteresting as to call forth no affection; most of them excite either a good or a bad one. Adversity may make us discontented, or it may teach humility and patience. Affliction may dispose either to pious resignation, or to impious repining. Prosperity may inflame sensuality and pride, or may supply the means of exercising moderation, beneficence, and gratitude to the Giver of all good. Injury may provoke hatred and revenge, or call forth the godlike virtues of forbearance and forgiveness. Solitude may infuse laziness, or afford leisure for industry. The bustle of busy life may form habits of cunning or candor, of selfishness or generosity.

On these, and all other occasions, we must shun the criminal, and embrace the virtuous, affection. We should study our own temper, and so anticipate the events of life as to be always ready to turn in this manner every occurrence to a good account, and make it subservient to the cultivation of our moral nature. [Abercrombie.]

72. What is the primary and most essential element in the due regulation of the will?

73. What is the highest class of truths, or motives?

74. Is there any obligation resting upon us to acquire a correct knowledge of these truths?

75. How are the truths of natural religion disclosed?

76. What claims have the truths of revealed religion to our regard?

77. How far is a man responsible in relation to the evidences of revealed religion, and the moral causes embraced in it?

78. What duty in regard to attention is binding upon us?

79. Is such attention a voluntary act?

80. What is the consequence of neglecting this voluntary process?

81. What other course of peculiar interest is sometimes adopted?

82. What other mental condition is yet to be mentioned in connection with this subject?

83. What is the moral character of such a mental state?

84. What is meant by a moral habit?

85. How are habits of vice formed?

86. To what conduct does the principle of habit apply?
87. How then is character originated?
88. What practical inference is to be drawn from the fact that character arises from individual actions?
89. How must habits of an injurious character be subdued?
90. What other condition of mind deserves attention?
91. What foreign aid is most efficacious toward a moral reformation?
92. What probability is there that the Deity would furnish such needful and appropriate aid to fallen man?
93. To what moral fact does this reasoning direct our attention?
94. How far do sound philosophy and Christianity concur in regard to this change?
95. When may this needful divine aid be looked for?
96. What practical use should be made of the various occurrences of human life?

### CHAPTER III.

#### THE APPETITES.

97. THE appetites are tendencies toward certain bodily things, and cravings for these things when they are withheld.

98. The strongest of these appetites are those which are common to man and brutes. These are the appetite for food (hunger and thirst), by which the individual is sustained; and the appetite of sex, or that by which the species is continued. Without them, reason would have been insufficient for these important purposes.

99. To the appetites just mentioned, may be added, the desire of rest after labor; the desire of sleep after long waking; the desire of warmth and shelter, of air and exercise.

Beside our *natural* appetites, we have some *acquired* ones: such is the appetite for tobacco, for opium, and other intoxicating drugs.

100. Those which we possess in common with the lower animals, are implanted in us for important purposes; but they require to be kept under the most rigid control, both of reason and the moral faculty. When they are allowed to break through these restraints, and become leading springs of action, they form a character the lowest in the scale, whether intellectual or moral.

Though our appetites are possessed by us in common with the inferior animals, yet, their operation is exalted and modified, in consequence of the other principles with



which in our nature they are allied, so that, where considerations of duty and expediency are regarded, their indulgence is accompanied by other and higher sources of enjoyment. [See Dewar, vol. i. pp. 363-368.]

The proper regulation of appetite is the triumph of civilization and religion. There are many circumstances which clearly show it to be the intention of the Creator, that our appetites should be indulged with moderation, and under those restraints which reason prescribes.

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- 97. What is meant by the term appetite?
  - 98. What are the strongest of these appetites?
  - 99. What other appetites may be mentioned?
  - 100. Are the animal appetites to be indulged without restraint?

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## CHAPTER IV.

### THE AFFECTIONS.

101. THE affections are tendencies or cravings directed toward persons as their immediate objects; while appetites are directed toward things. The direct and ultimate effect of the affections, is the communication either of enjoyment or of suffering to any of our fellow-creatures; and hence by some authors they are distinguished into *benevolent* and *malevolent*; by others into *benevolent* and *defensive*. They lead us to a particular conduct toward other men without reference to any principle except the intuitive impulse of the emotion itself.

102. Affection and passion are the same in kind; but they are different in degree. Affection is exercised with decency and moderation; but passion is affection carried to such excess, that it disturbs our reason, lessens, or entirely takes away from us our power of self-command, agitates even the body, and hurries us to action by an almost irresistible impulse.

103. The affections consist of *two classes*, the Benevolent, and the Defensive or Irascible. These, for the sake of brevity, may be designated by the terms Love, and Anger.

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- 101. What are the affections?
  - 102. How is an affection distinguished from a passion?
  - 103. What are the principal affections?



## SECTION I.—THE BENEVOLENT AFFECTIONS.

THE term Love is sometimes used to describe the bodily desires, as when we talk of a love of wine, or a love of the pleasures of the table. But the more direct and proper sense of the word is that in which it denotes an affection toward a person.

104. Love is variously modified according to the persons to whom it is directed: thus, there is conjugal love, the love of husband and wife; parental (paternal and maternal) love; filial love, the love of children toward their parents; fraternal love, the love of brothers and sisters toward each other; other kinds of family affection; friendship, the love by which friends are especially drawn to each other; public spirit, or the love of our fellow-citizens; patriotism, the love of our fellow-countrymen; universal benevolence, or philanthropy, the love that is borne to the whole human race, and to every member of it; love to God, or piety.

The benevolent affections are spoken of, figuratively, as the *heart*. A man's *heart is hard or cold*, when these affections are feeble and dull in him; he is *warm-hearted*, when they are strong; and *open-hearted*, when they are readily bestowed on those around him.

105. The exercise of all our benevolent affections is accompanied with an agreeable emotion, which shows that the design of the Creator is to communicate happiness to his intelligent creatures in connection with the exercise of virtuous dispositions. The object of the Deity in connecting agreeable emotions with the exercise of benevolence is, to induce us to cultivate, with peculiar care, a class of our active principles so immediately subservient to the happiness of human society.

106. It has been questioned whether there be in man any feeling of *pure benevolence, which aims at the good of others only*, without any view to the gratification of one's self.

By doing good to others, it is true, indeed, that we do most effectually gratify ourselves; for what can give a person more pleasure, than to reflect that he has been instrumental in promoting a fellow-creature's happiness? Yet every good man may be sensible that he often does good, and wishes well, to others, without any immediate

view to his own gratification, nay, without thinking of himself at all.

In fact, if we had not feelings purely benevolent, we could not gratify ourselves by doing others good. Children have been known to sacrifice their inclinations to the happiness of those they loved, when they themselves believed that their own interest would, in every respect, suffer by doing so.

It is not asserted, indeed, that all children, or all men, are so disinterested : it is only asserted that pure benevolence is to be found in human nature ; a doctrine, which, though to many it may seem self-evident, has been much controverted, and which there are men in the world, who, judging of all others by themselves, will never heartily acquiesce in.

107. When a benevolent affection turns our attention upon its object in a tranquil manner, it is *regard*. The affection, in a more marked form, is *love*. When it implies a sensitive and vigilant solicitude for the good of its object, it is *tenderness* ; when it absorbs the thought, so that reason is disregarded, it is *fondness* ; when this is the case, the affection is no longer a virtue ; still less is it so, when love becomes *doting*, *overweening*, *passionate*.

108. When benevolent feeling is exercised toward a person in view of some good received from him, the words by which such feeling is expressed are *thanks*. A better expression of the feeling consists, however, in doing acts of gratitude, in returning good for good.

109. Gratitude itself is a natural and virtuous affection ; but the acts which it prompts must be limited by rules of duty. A man who does what is wrong in nature for benefits received, makes his benefactor the director of his actions, instead of directing them himself as morality requires. Hence he is said to *sell himself* ; and to be *venal*.

110. Benevolent affections regarding a particular person, and not necessarily leading to action, are *good-will* ; when they produce a current of cheerful thoughts, they are *good-humor* ; when they lead a man to comply readily with the wishes of others, or to seek to give them pleasure, we have *good-nature*.

When this disposition is shown on the part of a superior, we term him *gracious* and *benign*. When a person's good-nature makes it easy to address him, he is

*affable*. If, in his behavior, he avoid all that may give offense to others, he is *courteous*. From the supposed prevalence of such habits in cities, they are characterized by the terms *urbanity* (from *urbs*, a city) and *civility*. The opposite of these are *rudeness*, *rusticity* (from *rus*, the country).

111. When benevolent feeling exists under provocation, it is distinguished by such names as *gentleness*, *mildness*, *meekness*; the opposites of resentment and malice.

112. We naturally share in the emotions which we witness in men: we then have a *fellow-feeling*, a *sympathy*, with them. When this disposition leads us to feel pain at the sight of pain, it is *compassion*: we *commiserate* the object. This feeling, being strongly confirmed by piety, came to be called *pity*.

Such a disposition, as it prompts us to abstain from adding to the pain felt, is *mercy*, or *clemency*; as it prompts us to remove the pain or want which we see, it is *charity*. But this word has also a wider sense, in which it describes benevolence, as it makes us abstain from judging unfavorably of other men.

All these affections lead to the performance of the duties of benevolence. [Beattie; Whewell.]

104. How is this affection modified according to the persons to whom it is directed?

105. What law of our nature may here be noticed with regard to the benevolent affections?

106. Has it not been questioned whether there be in man any feeling of pure benevolence which aims at the good of others only, without any view to the gratification of one's self?

107. What terms are employed to denote love in various degrees of intensity?

108. When does our benevolent feeling obtain the name of gratitude?

109. What limits must be applied to acts of gratitude?

110. What names are given to the manifestations of the benevolent affections, in their influence on the external behavior?

111. When benevolent feeling exists under provocation, by what names is it distinguished?

112. How are the benevolent affections modified by a regard to the circumstances of the object?

## SECTION II.—THE IRASCIBLE OR MALEVOLENT AFFECTIONS.

113. THE irascible affections are, for the most part, opposed to the virtue of benevolence; and so far they are to be repressed and controlled. Yet these affections, in their original, uncorrupted form, have a moral office, and give rise to virtues.

This is the case when they act as a defense against harm and wrong; and hence, in their various modifications, they may be termed *defensive affections*.

As opposed to harm, inflicted or threatened, they are *resentment*; as directed against wrong, they are *indignation*.

Their proper object is, primarily, a sense of blamable conduct in others; and they lead us to use proper measures for protecting ourselves against such conduct.

114. Such sentiments are a necessary part, not of benevolence, strictly speaking, but of justice. Without indignation against cruelty, fraud, falsehood, disorder, the virtues have not their full force in the mind. But anger, in order to be virtuous, must be directed solely against moral wrong.

While we disapprove of the character and conduct of men in certain circumstances, we are led, by our feelings of justice and benevolence, to take part with the injured and oppressed, against the oppressors; or to protect those who are threatened with injuries, by measures for defeating the schemes of their enemies.

A still more refined exercise of this class of feelings leads us to seek the reformation of the offender, and to convert him from an enemy into a friend.

115. The irascible affections are vicious when they are directed against *persons*, not against moral wrong.

*Antipathy, dislike, aversion* to any person, independently of his bad character and conduct, are vicious. It is vicious to be *displeased, irritated, incensed, exasperated* at any person, merely because his actions interfere with our pleasures and desires. The proneness to such anger is *irascibility*.

116. Our angry emotions become especially vicious when they swell into *rage* and *fury*, or settle into *malice* and *hatred*.

The term *rancor* denotes a fixed hate, which, by its inward working, has, as it were, diseased the soul in which it exists. *Spite* implies a vigilant desire to depress and mortify its object.

117. Moderate anger, arising from pain inflicted on us, is *offense*, which term is also used for the offensive act. A person *commits an offense* or *offends*, in the latter sense; and *takes offense*, or *is offended*, in the former.



If the act be one which violently transgresses common rules, it is an *outrage*.

Anger at pain received, impelling a man to inflict pain in return, is *revenge*. This term also implies the object or aim of the feeling, as well as the feeling itself. A man is *stimulated by revenge*, and *seeks his revenge*.

The same may be said of the word *vengeance*, another form of the word, but of the same origin. The man who admits into his heart this affection, and retains it, is *revengeful*, *vengeful*, *vindictive*.

118. Resentment naturally leads to the infliction of punishment; the object of which is to prevent similar conduct in others, not to gratify personal vengeance. Hence it is required to be done in a public manner; with proper deliberation and coolness; and with an exact adaptation of the penalty to the offense, and to the object to be attained.

119. The injured party is not likely to inflict punishment with the requisite impartiality and candor; for we are apt to feel too deeply injuries offered to ourselves, and not to make the proper allowance for the feelings of others, and the circumstances which led to the offense. Beside, they who are most susceptible of offenses, and most irritable under them, are generally least inclined to make allowances for others.

Hence, in all cases, our disapprobation of personal vengeance, or of a man taking the law into his own hands; and our perfect sympathy with the protectors of the public peace, when they dispassionately investigate a case of injury, and calmly adapt their measures to the real object to be attained by them—the protection of the public.

120. When the malevolent feelings, as manifested in the external behavior, affect our disposition to a person, without necessarily leading to action, they are *ill-will*. When they disturb the usual current of cheerful thoughts, they are *ill-humor*. When malevolent feelings lead us to speak or act with a view of giving pain to others, they are *ill-nature*. When they make us rejoice in another's pain, they are *malignity*.

121. Malevolent pain at the good which happens to another, and at our own want of this good, is *envy*.

[Whewell. Consult also Dewar, vol. i. pp. 371-388.]



113. What is to be said of the irascible affections?  
 114. Are resentment and indignation a part of virtue?  
 115. When are the irascible or malevolent affections vices?  
 116. When do our angry emotions become especially vicious?  
 117. What are the emotions called, which arise from pain inflicted on us?  
 118. What is the utility and proper exercise of resentment, in cases which concern the public peace?  
 119. Is it safe or proper to intrust the punishment of offenses to the injured party?  
 120. What names are applied to the malevolent feelings, as manifested in the external behavior?  
 121. How are the malevolent affections modified by a regard to the circumstances of the object?

### SECTION III.—THE PROPER GOVERNMENT OF THE APPETITES AND PASSIONS.

122. THE government of the passions is a difficult work; but absolutely necessary, if we wish to be happy either in the next world or in this. And as it is *the more difficult the longer it is delayed*, it is the part of prudence, as well as a matter of duty, to begin it without delay.

123. In order to acquire a command over our passions, habits of temperance and of useful industry must be maintained; the imagination must be guided and controlled; the love of nature, simplicity, and truth must be cherished; in the midst of lawful pleasure, we must maintain moderation and self-command; we are to oppose early the beginnings of passion, and avoid particularly all such objects as are apt to excite passions which we know predominate within us; when an improper passion is felt, we must direct our minds to objects which will call up emotions of an opposite character; above all an humble and ardent piety leading us to prayer, must be continually practiced.

124. We must beware lest bad passions impose on us by assuming a false name; for this often happens, and is often fatal to virtue.

Men are apt to mistake their own avarice for frugality, profusion for generosity, suspicion for cautious discernment, pride for magnanimity, ostentation for liberality, detraction for the love of truth, insolence for plain dealing, revenge for resentment, envy for emulation, and sensuality for necessary amusement.

125. We are to avoid all trains of thought, all companies, all books, and all opportunities of action, by which

we have reason to apprehend that irregular passions may be raised or encouraged.

How much good manners may be corrupted by evil communications, the sad experience of every age, and of almost every man, can abundantly testify. The world judges of men from the company they keep: and it is right that it should be so. No man will choose for his companion the person whom he either despises or disapproves. He therefore who associates with the wicked and the foolish gives proof of his own wickedness and folly.

126. Those books are eminently pernicious, by which criminal passions may be inflamed, or good principles subverted: they should be avoided as the pestilence.

To take pleasure in such books is a mark of as great corruption of mind, and ought to be accounted as dishonorable, as to keep company with pickpockets, gamblers, and atheists.

127. Games of chance, where money is the object, are dangerous in the extreme: they cherish evil passions without number; as avarice, anger, selfishness, discontent; and give rise to altercation and quarreling, and sometimes to the most shocking impiety. They occasion, as long as they continue, a total loss of time, and of all the rational pleasures of social life. They are generally detrimental to health, by keeping the body inactive, and encroaching on the hours of rest. They produce a feverish agitation of the spirits, as hurtful to the mind, as habitual dram-drinking would be to the body. They level all distinctions of sense and folly, of virtue and vice; and bring together on the same footing, men and women of decent, and of the most abandoned manners. [Beattie.]

122. Is the government of the passions a difficult or easy duty?

123. By what measures may we acquire a command over our passions?

124. What caution is sometimes necessary to be observed in respect to our passions?

125. What things are to be avoided, that we may have our passions under proper control?

126. What books are to be considered dangerous?

127. How may it be shown that games of chance, where money is the object, are dangerous in the extreme?

## SECTION IV.—THE MORAL CULTURE OF THE BENEVOLENT AFFECTIONS.

128. It may be said that we have not the power of generating or directing our affections, and of forming our own character.

129. We reply that this objection involves much too large an assertion. It is very far from being true, that we have no power over our own affections or our own character. The universal voice of mankind recognizes the existence of such a power, by the condemnation which it awards to the want of benevolent affections. This implies that a man's affections are, in some way, subject to his own control.

130. The will is not in contact with the emotion or affection, but it is in contact with the idea of that object which awakens the emotion; and therefore, although not in contact with the emotion, it may be vested with an effectual control over it. It cannot bid compassion into the bosom, apart from the object which awakens it; but it can bid a personal entry into the house of mourning, and then the compassion will flow apace: or it can bid a mental conception of the bereaved and afflicted family there, and then the sensibility will equally arise, whether a suffering be seen or a suffering be thought of.

*It is thus that we can will the right emotions into being, not immediately, but mediately: as the love of God, by thinking on God; a sentiment of friendship, by dwelling in contemplation on the congenial qualities of our friend; the admiration of moral excellence, by a steady attention to it.*

*It is thus too that we can bid away the wrong emotions, not separately and in disjunction from their objects, but by ridding our mind of the thoughts which excite and originate emotions. We may rid ourselves of anger, for example, by forgetting the injury, or by directing our attention to some other object. Hence the culture or regulation of the heart is mainly dependent on the regulation of the thoughts.*

[Chalmers' Works, vol. v. pp. 206, 207.]

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128. What objection here deserves to be considered?

129. What reply shall be made to this objection?

130. In what manner can we control our affections?

## SECTION V.—INFLUENCE EXERTED UPON THE AFFECTIONS BY ATTENTION AND HABIT.

I. *Influence of Attention.*

131. THE act of attention consists in directing the mind intensely and habitually to all the considerations which ought to guide us in the particular relation to which the affection refers. It leads us to place ourselves in the situation of others ; and, with a kind of personal, almost selfish interest, to enter into their wants, their anxieties, and their feelings ; and thus, in their place, to judge of the emotions and the conduct which are due from us to them. Such is the exercise of one who wishes to follow the great rule of *doing to others as he would that they should do to him.*

II. *Influence of Habit.*

132. The tendency of all emotions is to become weaker by repetition, or to be less acutely felt the oftener they are experienced.

133. The tendency of actions is to become easier by repetition, so that those which require at first close attention come to be performed without effort, and almost without consciousness.

134. An affection consists of an emotion leading to an action ; and the natural progress of the mind, in the proper exercise of the affection, is, that the emotion becomes less acutely felt as the affection becomes easier and more familiar.

135. Thus, a scene of wretchedness, or a tale of sorrow, will produce in the inexperienced an intensity of emotion not felt by him whose life has been devoted to deeds of mercy ; and a superficial observer is apt to consider the condition of the latter as one of insensibility, produced by familiarity with scenes of distress. But this is not so. It is that healthy and natural progress of the mind, in which the emotion is gradually diminished in force as it is followed by its proper actions ; that is, as the mere intensity of feeling is exchanged for the habit of active benevolence.

136. The emotion must be steadily followed by the action which belongs to it. If this be neglected, the harmony of the moral process is destroyed, and, as the



emotion becomes weakened, it is succeeded by cold insensibility or barren selfishness.

137. There are two conclusions arising out of this subject. The one relates to the *bad effects of fictitious scenes of sorrow*, as represented on the stage, or in works of fancy. The emotion is produced without the corresponding action, and the consequence is likely to be a cold and useless sentimentalism, instead of a sound cultivation of the benevolent affections.

The second conclusion is, that, *in cultivating the benevolent affections in the young*, we should be careful to observe the process pointed out in the philosophy of the moral feelings. They should be familiarized with scenes of actual suffering, but this ought to be accompanied by deeds of minute and active kindness, so as to produce a full and lively impression of the wants and feelings of the sufferer.

[Abercrombie.]

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131. What is the nature of the influence exerted by attention, aided by a certain act of imagination?

132. What is the tendency of all emotions?

133. What is the tendency of actions?

134. What is the nature of an affection?

135. How is the proper exercise of affection illustrated?

136. What should follow emotion?

137. What important conclusions arise out of this subject respecting the cultivation of the benevolent affections?

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## CHAPTER V.

### THE DESIRES.

138. OUR desires differ from our appetites, in not taking their rise from the body; in not operating periodically, after certain intervals; and in not ceasing on the attainment of a particular object. While pursuing the objects of desire, we are acting a part more suited to our rational nature than when yielding to the dominion of indolence or of appetite; and it is not till we pervert them from their true end that we fall in the esteem of our fellow-creatures.

139. The mental condition which we call desire ap-



pears to lie in a great measure at the foundation of character; and, for a sound moral condition, it is required that the desires be directed to worthy objects; and that the degree or strength of the desire be accommodated to the true and relative value of each of these objects. If the desires are thus directed, worthy conduct will be likely to follow in a steady and uniform manner. If they are allowed to break from these restraints of reason and the moral principle, the man is left at the mercy of unhallowed passion, and is liable to those irregularities which result from such a derangement of the moral feelings.

140. The desires may indeed exist in an ill-regulated state, while the conduct is restrained by various principles; such as submission to human laws, a regard to character, or even a certain feeling of what is morally right, contending with the vitiated principle within. But this cannot be considered as the healthy condition of a moral being.

It is only when the desire itself is sound that we can say the man is in moral health. This, accordingly, is the great principle so often and so strikingly enforced in the sacred writings, "Keep thy heart with all diligence, because out of it are the issues of life." "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God."

Thus there are desires that are folly, and there are desires that are vice, even though they should not be followed by indulgence; and there are desires which tend to purify and elevate the moral nature, though their objects should be beyond the reach of our full attainment in the present state of being.

[See Exposition of the Tenth Commandment.]

141. Our principal desires are, the desire of safety, the desire of having, the desire of society, the desire of superiority, the desire of knowledge, the desire of moral improvement, the desire of action, the desire of happiness, the desire of esteem.

#### (1.) *The Desire of Safety.*

142. The desire of safety is originated by a knowledge of our exposure to the effects of the conflicting desires of other men. The instinctive love of life, the instinctive desire to avoid privation, pain, and constraint, are ex-

panded and unfolded by memory, reflection, and foresight, so that life, ease, and comfort become objects to which man tends with conscious thought, as well as from blind impulse. He is not satisfied with present safety, but is anxious to have *security* for the future.

(2.) *The Desire of Property.*

143. This desire is apparent in all stages of society. Food, clothing, weapons, tools, ornaments, houses, carriages, ships, are universally objects of his desire. At first these things are desired as a means of gratifying his natural appetites, or his affections; of supporting and sheltering his family; of repelling and mastering his enemies. But afterward he delights to consider them as connected with himself in a permanent and exclusive manner, and to look upon them as *his*, as his *own*, as his *property*. The things which he thus looks upon as his own he is disturbed at the prospect of losing, and is angry at any one who attempts to take them from him.

144. The pursuit of wealth derives its moral character from the end for which it is sought. A man may desire wealth as a means of luxury and sensuality: and in such a case the desire of wealth is opposed to temperance, rather than to justice.

Or, it may be desired as a means of benevolent action, or of right action in many other ways. A person's power of doing good, of many kinds, depends much upon the station and influence which wealth bestows. The desire of wealth for this purpose is virtuous.

145. Though wealth may be desired for ends which make the desire virtuous, the progress of men's habits is such that, when sought at first as a means, it is afterward desired as an end. The desire to acquire money is then unlimited; and is *covetousness*, *avarice*.

(3.) *The Desire of Society.*

146. The most prominent forms in which this desire appears are, the *desire of family society*, and of *civil society*, images of which may be seen in the instincts of animals: of the former, in pairing animals; of the latter, in gregarious animals. This desire springs up in early childhood, before the dawn of reason.

The desire of safety and the desire of property may be supposed to give rise to a desire of civil society, as of a means by which such objects may be secured. But beside this consideration, man is by his very constitution a social animal. He is nowhere found, nor can he exist in any other state than in society, in one form or other.

The social principle shows itself at all periods of life and in all conditions of civilization. In persons shut up from intercourse with their fellow men, it has manifested itself in the closest attachment to animals; as if the human mind could not exist without some object on which to exercise the feelings intended to bind man to his fellows. It is said that the Count de Lauzun, during a nine years' confinement in a room where no light was admitted but through a chink in the roof, attached himself to a spider, and continued for some time to amuse himself with attempting to tame it, with catching flies for its support, and with superintending the progress of its web. When the cruel jailer discovered the count thus amusing himself, he killed the spider, the loss of whose society was felt by the count as the loss of a beloved child is felt by a mother.

The desire of society shows itself in the union of men in civil society and social intercourse; in the offices of friendship, and in the still closer union of the domestic circle.

The abuse of this principle produces the contracted spirit of party.

Men desire to act, and are fitted to act, in common; declaring and enforcing rules by which the conduct of all shall be governed. They thus act as governors, legislators, judges, subjects, citizens. Without such community of action, and such common rules really enforced, there can be no tolerable comfort, peace, or order. Without civil society man cannot act as man.

147. Another spring of action, intimately connected with the continuance of the social state, is a *mutual understanding* among men, by which they may learn to anticipate and to depend upon the actions of each other. A large part of the actions that take place among men are regulated by their mutual understanding established by promises, or in some other way. In the different employments of life there is a mutual dependence, the result of

a mutual understanding, which serves as a bond of society, and is to be ranked among the principal springs of human action.

(4.) *The Desire of Superiority and of Power.*

148. The desire of superiority is only a modification of the desire of power. There is one particular, however, in which the desire of superiority differs from the desire of power. The desire of superiority, or the principle of emulation, is only excited by competition; whereas power is sought after in the absence of every kind of rivalry.

149. It is interesting to trace the different ways in which different individuals acquire an ascendancy over others. And as all the gifts of rank and fortune, and intellect, as well as of moral goodness, may be made in some way or other subservient to this end, they are all the objects of pursuit for the sake of the notice which they attract, and the power which they communicate.

A man desires to be more wealthy than his neighbors; and hence accumulates riches by labor, agriculture, trade, or traffic.

A man wishes not only to surpass, but to guide and control other men. He wishes that they should *obey* when he *commands*. He has a *desire of power*. To this object, strength and skill, and riches and eloquence, may all be as means to ends. When it becomes the governing propensity, the strongest principles of human nature give way before it, even those of personal comfort and safety. We see this in the conqueror and in the statesman.

The individual under its control, often is hurried away from the attainment of one degree of influence to another, till he begins to aim at a point of elevation which he cannot reach without deep criminality. In the poet's Lady Macbeth is drawn the most vivid picture of a case not very uncommon, in which the principle of ambition has entirely subdued every suggestion of conscience and all the gentler emotions of humanity. The deliberate sacrifice of all other considerations to the gaining "sole sovereign sway and masterdom," by the murder of Duncan, is forcibly expressed in her invocation on hearing of his fatal entrance under her battlements:—



“Come, you spirits  
 That tend on mortal thoughts, unsex me here ;  
 And fill me, from the crown to th’ toe, top-full  
 Of direst cruelty ; make thick my blood,  
 Stop up the access and passage to remorse,  
 That no compunctious visitings of nature  
 Shake my fell purpose, nor keep peace between  
 The effect, and it. Come to my woman’s breasts,  
 And take my milk for gall, you murd’ring ministers,  
 Wherever in your sightless substances  
 You wait on nature’s mischief. Come, thick night !  
 And pall thee in the dunnest smoke of hell,  
 That my keen knife see not the wound it makes,  
 Nor heaven peep through the blanket of the dark,  
 To cry hold ! hold !”

There are some striking passages illustrative of ambition, and of the guilt and misery to which it leads, in Milton’s *Paradise Lost*.

The *desire of power often aims at a higher and nobler object* : such is the desire of exercising power over the minds of men ; of persuading a multitude, by arguments or eloquence, to deeds of usefulness ; of pleading the cause of the oppressed ; a power of influencing the opinions of others, and of guiding them into sound sentiments and virtuous conduct.

In no case is the power of man over man more wonderful, and in general more enviable, than in the influence which the *orator* exercises over the thoughts and passions of a great multitude ; while, without the force or the splendor of rank, he moves their will, and bends their desire to the accomplishment of his own purposes. This is a power far more elevated than that which only reaches to the bodies of men : it extends to the affections and intentions of the heart ; and seems as if it were capable of arresting the trains of our ideas, and of awakening or of creating the feelings that are suited to its designs. The conscious possession of a power so vast and so peculiar, is accompanied with a degree of pleasure proportionably great ; and it may be supposed that the pleasure will prompt to the frequent and the more extended exercise of the superiority from which it springs.

[Dewar’s *Moral Philosophy*, vol. i. p. 421.]

#### (5.) *The Desire of Knowledge.*

150. Man, by his rational nature, is constantly impelled to observe, to think, to reason, to classify, to trace causes



and consequences. To do this, is to know, and to continue to do it, is to go on from knowledge to knowledge.

*The wisdom of nature appears* in giving the desire of knowledge that peculiar direction which is best adapted to the necessities of every different stage of life—leading us in youth to give our exclusive attention to the properties of the material objects with which we are surrounded—and in maturer years to the pursuits of society, to politics, science, religion, and to the endless varieties of studies and professions which are comprehended in the avocations of mankind.

It is this desire, in addition to the desire of fame, which prompts the youth to go to distant lands. From the gratification of the same desire the philosopher receives a compensation for the privations of that life which he consumes in retirement.

“What need words  
To paint its power? For this the daring youth  
Breaks from his weeping mother's anxious arms,  
In foreign climes to rove: the pensive sage,  
Heedless of sleep, or midnight's harmful damp,  
Hangs o'er the sickly taper: and untired  
The virgin follows, with enchanted step,  
The mazes of some wild and wondrous tale,  
From morn to eve. Hence finally, by night,  
The village matron, round the blazing hearth  
Suspends the infant audience with her tales,  
Breathing astonishment!” \* \* \*

151. The class of actions to which the desire of knowledge impels us depends on the objects to which it is directed. These may vary from the idle tattle of the day to the highest attainments in literature and science. The principle may be applied to pursuits of a frivolous or useful kind, and to such acquirements as lead only to pedantry or sophistry; or it may be directed to the obtaining of a superficial acquaintance with a great variety of subjects without a correct knowledge of any of them.

152. The desire, under consideration, should be directed only to worthy objects: it should not be gratified at the expense of important duties which we may owe to others in the particular situation in which we are placed; and it should be so directed as to promote the benefit of others.

153. The desire of *communicating* our knowledge is closely connected with the desire of acquiring it. Though

the pleasure accompanying it may be traced to the lively exercise of our social affections, or to the feeling of superiority which accompanies the conscious possession of knowledge, it is not the less true that it forms a powerful motive to perseverance in the most laborious study. Many a man would not think it worth his while to pursue his studies with so much steadiness and application, if he enjoyed not, in hope, the satisfaction of enlightening and thus benefiting his fellow-creatures.

*The pleasure we receive from communicating knowledge* is a happy provision of our nature, intended to increase our enjoyment and our virtue; and *was evidently designed* to render the blessings of knowledge the common inheritance of the species.

(6.) *The Desire of Moral Improvement.*

154. This desire leads to the highest state of man; and it bears this peculiar character, that it is adapted to men in every scale of society, and tends to diffuse a beneficial influence around the circle with which the individual is connected.

As to the nature of this desire, it prompts to an habitual effort to regulate every desire and every affection and every act by the moral principle, and by the standard of the divine will.

(7.) *The Desire of Action.*

155. This desire indicates the restlessness of mind which leads it to require some object on which its powers must be exercised, and without which it preys upon itself and becomes miserable. The happiness of man mainly consists in the exercise of his bodily and mental faculties.

156. The design of the Creator in implanting this desire seems to have been, to remind us that we are formed not for inactivity, but for the discharge of most important duties. As it is the ordination of providence that no acquisition, usually, should be made without labor and effort, it is the kind appointment of heaven that this very labor should be a source of enjoyment. Whatever be our rank or fortune, therefore, we cannot be idle, without being at the same time unhappy.

157. A person accustomed to a life of activity longs for

ease and retirement, and when he has accomplished his purpose finds himself wretched.

The frivolous engagements of the unoccupied are refcrable to the same cause. They arise not from any interest which such occupations really possess, but simply from the desire of mental excitement—the felicity of having something to do.

(8.) *The Desire of Happiness, or the Principle of Self-love.*

158. This spring of action is a propensity which leads us to study our own interest, gratification, and comfort ; and in many instances it becomes the ruling spring of action.

Like the other mental feelings, it is to be considered as a part of our moral constitution, and calculated to answer important purposes, provided it be kept in its proper place, and do not encroach on the duties and affections which we owe to other men. When thus regulated, it constitutes prudence, or a just regard to our own interest, safety, and happiness ; when it becomes morbid in its exercise, or interferes with the duties which we owe to others, it degenerates into selfishness.

159. A sound and rational self-love ought to lead us to seek our own true happiness, and should prove a check upon those appetites and passions which interfere with this. It should lead us, therefore, to avoid not only everything that is opposed to our interest, but everything that is calculated to impair our peace of mind, and that harmony of the moral feelings without which there can be no real happiness. This includes a due regulation of the desires and a due exercise of the affections, as a moral condition which promotes our happiness and comfort.

160. Self-love, as just explained, appears to be placed as a regulating principle among the other powers, much inferior indeed to the great principle of conscience, so far as regards the moral condition of the individual, but calculated to answer important purposes in promoting the harmonies of society. This subject will come again under our notice.

(9.) *The Desire of Esteem.*

161. *Esteem* is given to what is deemed right and good. *Admiration* and *applause* are often bestowed upon quali-

ties which have no moral character ; as strength, beauty, wit, and the like. The want of such qualities is a ground, among many men, of contempt ; and if the deficiency appear suddenly and glaringly, of ridicule. Ridicule implies that the object which excites it is so palpably below the standard which we apply to it, that the comparison is extravagant and absurd.

The desire of admiration produces a dread of this contempt and ridicule. But the desire of being admired, for other than moral excellences, has in it nothing of virtue.

162. The desire of admiration produces a ready belief that we are admired, and a joy and elation of mind accompanying such belief. This disposition is *vanity*.

Vanity often leads a man to aim at admiration for distinctions of a very trivial character, or even for qualities which he does not possess. It thus includes the *love of flattery*. Pride, on the contrary, as opposed to vanity, seems to consist in a man's entertaining a high opinion of himself, while he is indifferent to the opinion of others : thus we speak of a man who is too proud to be vain.

163. From the desire of esteem the *love of fame* has its origin—one of the strongest passions in the youthful and ardent breast. It is to the love of what is called glory that we may impute much of what is useful, and what is hurtful in the history of mankind. This was the animating principle which in other ages assembled the multitudes of Greece to the Olympic festivals ; and the aspiring candidates who entered the lists felt as if the eyes of the civilized world were turned upon them, and as if the possession of the wreath of laurel in the view of so many spectators, gave to this perishable emblem of victory a value which no other object of ambition could possess. The desires of esteem, and power, and superiority, were here all combining to produce an appetite for glory, and to make the attainment of fame the first and the dearest end of existence.

164. Though inferior to a high sense of moral obligation, the desire of esteem may yet be considered a laudable principle ; as when a man seeks the approbation of others by deeds of benevolence, public spirit, or patriotism ; by actions calculated to promote the ad-



vantage or the comfort either of communities or of individuals.

165. The desire of praise becomes criminal when it becomes the ruling spring of our conduct ; when the regard which we pay to the opinions of men encroaches on that reverence which we owe to the voice of conscience and the sense of duty. The proportion which this desire holds to other principles of action is what renders it either innocent or criminal. The crime charged by our Savior upon the Jewish rulers was, not that they loved the praise of men, but that they loved it *more than the praise of God*.

Even in cases where there is no direct competition between the praise of men and the praise of God, the passion for applause may become criminal by occupying the place of a better principle. We know that good deeds, done merely *to be seen of men*, lose their reward with God. If, in determining a doubtful question concerning our conduct, the first question which occurs to us be, not whether an action is right in itself, and such as a good man ought to perform, but whether it is such as will find acceptance with the world, and be favorable to our fame, the conclusion is too evident, that the desire of applause has obtained an undue ascendant. What a wise and good man ought to study, is to preserve his mind free from such solicitude concerning praise as may be in hazard of overcoming his sense of duty. The approbation of men he may wish to obtain, as far as is consistent with the approbation of God. But when both cannot be enjoyed together, there ought to be no suspense. He is to show that, in the cause of truth and virtue, he is superior to human opinion. [Dr. Blair.]

166. Regard to the opinion of others is the origin of our respect to character in matters which do not come under the higher principle of morals, and is of extensive influence in promoting the harmonies, proprieties, and decencies of society. It is thus the foundation of good-breeding, and leads to kindness and accommodation in little matters which do not belong to the class of duties. It is also the source of what we usually call decorum and propriety, which lead a man to conduct himself in a manner becoming his character and circumstances, in regard to things which do not involve any higher principle.



There are many actions, not really wrong, by which a man may render himself despised and ridiculous.

[See Dr. Dewar, vol. i. pp. 414-417.]

167. The following considerations may serve to restrain within due bounds our desire for human praise :—

(1.) The applause of the world is not always the reward of merit, but is too often lavished upon the despicable and the vile.

(2.) It is important to consider from whence popular applause generally proceeds : it is not from the discerning few, and the good, but from a mixed multitude who in their whole conduct are guided by humor and caprice far more than by reason ; who inquire superficially and judge rashly, and often erroneously.

(3.) The applause of men, unlike that of the Supreme Being, proceeds from a view of external actions only, and may therefore be wrongly placed, and worthless.

(4.) Consider how narrow and circumscribed, as to place, and time, and persons, that fame is, which the vain-glorious man so eagerly pursues.

(5.) An excessive love of human praise never fails to undermine the regard due to conscience, and to corrupt the heart. It turns off the eye of the mind from the ends it ought chiefly to have in view ; and sets up a false light for its guide. It frequently impels men to actions which are directly criminal. It obliges them to follow the current of popular opinion wheresoever it may lead them, and hence shipwreck is often made of a good conscience.

[Dr. Blair.]

(6.) How trifling in our estimation would seem the praise of man, did we allow ourselves more constantly to believe that to love it more than the praise of God is one of the greatest crimes, and that its possession cannot prevent the wicked, at a future period, from rising to shame and everlasting contempt !

168. Imperishable fame is to be obtained, not in the pursuit of the praise of men, but in the *faithful performance of our duty*.

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138. How do the desires differ from the appetites ?

139. What is necessary to a sound moral condition of the desires ?

140. May not the desires be ill-regulated and vicious, while the outward conduct is blameless ?

141. What are our principal desires ?

142. How is the desire of safety manifested in man ?

143. How is the desire of property manifested in man?
144. What gives moral character to the pursuit of wealth?
145. What is frequently the progress of men's habits in the pursuit of wealth?
146. In what prominent forms does the desire of society appear?
147. What other spring of action is intimately connected with the existence of society, and in some measure implied in what has been said?
148. Is the desire of superiority and the desire of power an identical desire?
149. What illustrations of this desire in man may be mentioned?
150. How does the desire of knowledge operate?
151. To what actions does the desire of knowledge impel us?
152. How should this desire be regulated?
153. What desire is nearly allied to the desire of acquiring knowledge?
154. What is the nature and tendency of the desire of moral improvement?
155. What is the nature of the desire of action?
156. What is the obvious design of the Creator in the implantation of this desire?
157. What facts may be explained by a reference to this desire of action?
158. What is the nature of the desire of happiness?
159. What should be the influence of a sound and rational self-love?
160. What relation does self-love bear to our other active powers?
161. What difference with respect to virtue, is to be made between the desire of esteem, and the desire of admiration?
162. What vicious disposition is allied to, and produced by, the desire of admiration?
163. What desire is nearly allied to the desire of esteem?
164. When may the desire of esteem and of approbation be regarded as virtuous?
165. Beyond what limits does the desire of praise become criminal?
166. What good influence may the love of approbation exert upon the social intercourse of men?
167. What consideration should serve to restrain within due bounds our desire for human praise?
168. What is the only true basis of an imperishable fame?  
[Abercrombie; Whewell; Dewar.]

## CHAPTER VI.

### GENERAL REMARKS UPON THE ACTIVE PRINCIPLES ALREADY CONSIDERED.

169. WE consider our reason, rather than our desires and affections, as being *ourselves*. We speak of desire, love, anger, as mastering *us*, or of *ourselves* as controlling them. Further, we apply to desire and affections, when uncontrolled by reason, the term *passion*, as if man in such cases were passive and merely acted on; and as if he were really active only when he acts in conformity with his reason.

Still it is to be maintained that *man, under the influence of such passions, is not really passive*. When he acts under such influences he adopts the suggestions of desire or affection, and rejects the control of reason; but this he does in all violations of reasonable rules. To say that passion is irresistible, is to annihilate reason, and to exclude the most essential condition of human action.

170. The act of volition is ordinarily the result of the following process:—We desire an object, or we experience one of the affections or springs of action; the next mental act is proposing to ourselves the question, Shall we gratify the desire—shall we exercise the affection? Then follows the process of considering or deliberating. We perceive, perhaps, a variety of motives, considerations, or inducements, some of which are in favor of gratifying the desire or exercising the affection, others opposed to it. We therefore proceed to weigh the relative force of these opposing motives, with the view of determining which of them we shall allow to regulate our decision. We at length make up our mind on this, and resolve, we shall suppose, to do the act; this is followed by the mental condition of willing, or simple volition.

171. It is necessary that the individual on whom motives are expected to operate should be fully informed in regard to them as truths addressed to the understanding; that he direct his attention to them with suitable intensity, and exercise his reasoning powers upon their tendency; and that he be himself in a certain healthy state of moral feeling.

172. In all our intercourse with mankind, we proceed upon an absolute confidence in the *uniformity of the operation of moral causes*, or motives, provided we are acquainted with the moral condition of the individual. We can foretell, for example, the respective effects which a tale of distress will have upon a cold-hearted miser, and a man of active benevolence, with the same confidence with which we can predict the different action of an acid upon an alkali and upon a metal; and there are individuals in regard to whose integrity and veracity, in any situation in which they can be placed, we have a confidence similar to that with which we rely on the course of nature. In this manner we gradually acquire, by experience, a knowledge of mankind; precisely as, by

observation or experiment, we acquire a knowledge of the operation of physical agents.

We learn hence that different motives must be used with different individuals to influence them to the same conduct; and we proceed on the conviction that certain motives or truths have a certain uniform tendency to influence the volitions of a moral being, provided he can be induced seriously to attend to them, and is in the moral condition required for their efficiency.

[Abercrombie; Whewell.]

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169. What practical distinction is made between the reason or conscience and our desires and affections?

170. What is the ordinary process by which a reflecting person comes to the act of volition or willing?

171. What is necessary to the due operation of motives or moral causes?

172. Is there an established uniformity in the operation of moral causes?

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## CHAPTER VII.

### OF THE MORAL FACULTY, OR CONSCIENCE, AND ITS OPERATIONS.

#### SECTION I.—CONSCIENCE IS AN ORIGINAL FACULTY.

173. CONSCIENCE is the faculty by which we *distinguish right from wrong* in regard to conduct, desires, or affections; by which we *approve* of what is deemed right, and *disapprove* of what is deemed wrong; by which we are *impelled* to practice what is judged to be right, and *prohibited* from doing what is regarded as wrong.

Some have objected to the doctrine that conscience is to be regarded as a distinct faculty of the mind, and prefer to regard it as merely the exercise of its other faculties upon a particular subject, and in a particular form. It has been pronounced to be an operation of the judgment, comparing our actions with the standard of duty, and pronouncing their agreement or disagreement.

But in favor of the first view taken it may be said, that if we attribute to the mind the faculty of understanding, because it is capable of knowledge; the faculty of judgment because it compares; the faculty of will, because it chooses and refuses; there seems to be no good reason why we should not attribute to it also the faculty of con-



science, because it distinguishes right and wrong, and approves and disapproves of our actions.

[See Reid's Works, vol. iii. pp. 164-172.]

174. That we have moral judgments—*notions* of actions as virtuous, or the contrary—will not be denied; and that such judgments are presupposed, in our moral emotions, is manifest from the circumstance that the latter are uniformly governed, and may be reversed, by the former. Let an action be ever so praiseworthy, it excites no feeling of approbation if we do not *judge* it to be a *right* action. And, on the contrary, let it be ever so flagitious, it awakens no feeling of condemnation if it be not *considered* an *improper* action.

Persecution on the ground of religious opinion will be allowed to be censurable and criminal; yet the mind of the persecutor Saul did not disapprove either of his own conduct or of that of his companions in iniquity, because he verily thought *that he ought* to do many things contrary to the name of Christ. Here it is evident that judgment preceded and governed feeling. How can it be doubted, especially as we find that at a future period, when his moral judgment was reversed, his feelings also underwent a change; and that he then so strongly condemned the conduct he had once approved, as to include it in the catalogue of his greatest sins, that he had persecuted the church of God. [Payne's Moral Science.]

173. What mental faculty is described by the term conscience?

174. How does it appear that moral judgments are presupposed in our moral emotions of approbation and disapprobation?

#### SECTION II.—WANT OF UNIFORMITY IN ITS DECISIONS.

175. THERE is a course of reasoning against the existence of a moral faculty more specious than solid, and which might be employed with equal success to disprove any other of our mental faculties. It might with equal plausibility be argued that we have not the power of perceiving truth, because some individuals are born idiots, and men in all ages have been subject to the strongest illusions, and have embraced innumerable errors; and what has been admitted as unquestionably true at one time, has been rejected as manifestly false at another. But, moreover, the different state of feeling with which



the same action is contemplated is to be ascribed to *the different views which are taken of its moral character*.

To say nothing of parricide, infanticide, the offering up of human sacrifices—practices abhorred by us, but approved, at least not disapproved, by multitudes—how is it to be explained that one half of the inhabitants of our own country practice habitually, without any self-reproach, modes of conduct which the other half cannot witness without powerful feelings of disapprobation? Is it not the case that their moral judgments differ, and that, from this difference, there results a corresponding difference of moral feeling?

We do not then merely form notions of actions as right or wrong, but we approve of the one, and disapprove of the other. *The mind has an original susceptibility of moral emotion*; but this emotion does not arise on the mere contemplation of an action; *it follows, and is governed by the moral judgment* which the mind forms of it. [Payne's Moral Science. See also Chalmers' Works, vol. i. pp. 339, 340.]

176. The diversity in the moral judgments of men may be accounted for, without rejecting the idea of a moral faculty or conscience, by adverting to three considerations.

(1.) To the different situations in which mankind are placed, partly by the diversity in their physical circumstances, and partly by the unequal degrees of civilization which they have attained.

(2.) To the diversity of their speculative opinions, arising from their unequal measures of knowledge or of capacity; and

(3.) To the different moral import of the same action, under different systems of external behavior.

These considerations are explained, at length, by Dugald Stewart [Works, vol. v. book ii. chap. 3]; and a complete answer is thus furnished to the objections of Dr. Paley and others against the existence of a moral faculty.

[See also Smith's Moral Philosophy, vol. i.]

175. How is it to be accounted for, if all men possess the faculty of conscience, above described, that the same action is approved by some and disapproved by others; that its operations are not uniform, and that it seems to be wanting in some individuals; that what is esteemed virtuous at one time, becomes vicious at another? It is asked also whether conscience is not thus proved to be a mere factitious thing; the result not of the constitution of our nature, but of education and custom?

176. What circumstances give rise to the diversity in the moral judgments of men in different countries, respecting certain practices or opinions?

## SECTION III.—CONSCIENCE IMPLIES A SENSE OF OBLIGATION.

177. To possess notions of right and wrong in human conduct ; to be convinced that we *ought* to do or to forbear an action, implies and supposes a *sense of obligation* existent in the mind. A man who feels that it is wrong for him to do a thing, possesses a sense of obligation to refrain. This is a property of our moral constitution.

178. In most men, the sense of obligation refers, with greater or less distinctness, to the will of a superior being. The impression, however obscure, is, in general, fundamentally this : I must do so or so, because God requires it.

179. That a sense of duty is not resolvable into a regard to our own happiness, but is an ultimate feeling, seems to be established by the following arguments :—

(1.) There are, in all languages, words equivalent to *duty* and *interest*, which men have constantly distinguished in their signification. They may coincide in their application, but they convey very different ideas. When I wish to persuade a man to a particular action, I address some of my arguments to a sense of duty, and others to the regard he has to his own interest.

(2.) The emotions arising from the contemplation of what is right and wrong in conduct are different, both in kind and degree, from those which are produced by a calm regard to our own happiness.

(3.) Although a sense of duty, and an enlightened regard to our own happiness, conspire, in most instances, to give the same direction to our conduct, so as to put it beyond a doubt, that, even in this world, a virtuous life is true wisdom, yet this is a truth by no means obvious to the common sense of mankind, but deduced from an accurate investigation of the *remote consequences* of our different actions. And therefore the great lessons of morality which are obvious to all mankind could never have been suggested to them merely by a regard to their own interest.

(4.) Moral judgments are formed at an early period of life, before children are able to form the general notion of happiness ; indeed in the very infancy of their reason.

[Dugald Stewart's Works, vol. v. book ii. chap. 2 ; Reid's Works, vol. iii. p. 150.]

177. Do our moral judgments and emotions involve a sense of obligation?

178. To what object does a sense of moral obligation refer?

179. How does it appear that a sense of duty is not resolvable, as some suppose, into a regard to our own happiness, but is an ultimate and distinct feeling?

#### SECTION IV.—SUPREMACY OF CONSCIENCE.

180. It is manifest, both from reason and Scripture, that the authority of conscience is great. When a man believes, upon due deliberation, that a certain action is right, that action is right *to him*; and he is to be held guilty if he violates his conscience; if he does one thing while his sense of obligation is directed to its contrary.

181. That conscience has a natural right to regulate the whole human system is evident from the following considerations:—

(1.) It may be innocent or praiseworthy in certain circumstances, to counteract our bodily appetites and refuse to gratify them; but to counteract the dictates of conscience, is felt to be blamable.

(2.) The dictates of conscience are universally regarded as more sacred than the principles of taste, and of a higher character. These may be violated, and yet the violator is not viewed as committing a crime; not so the violator of the dictates of conscience.

(3.) The supremacy of conscience is often asserted with awful power, when, in the midst even of outward prosperity, it makes the transgressor miserable, and when the transgressor is about to die and has nothing to fear from man.

182. The conclusion is, that to allow no more to this part than to other parts of our nature; to let it guide and govern only occasionally, in common with the rest, as its turn happens to come,—this is not to act conformably to the constitution of man.

And though conscience may lose its power when borne down by evil habits or tumultuous passion, as the strongest man by being kept long in fetters may lose the use of his limbs, yet conscience still retains its authority, that is, its right to govern. It prescribes measures to every appetite, affection, and passion, and says to every other principle of action, *so far thou mayst go, but no farther*.

Hence it may be seen how foolishly those men argue who give way to all their passions without reserve, and

excuse themselves by saying, that every passion is *natural*, and that they cannot be blamed for doing what nature prompts them to do. It is only a part, and that confessedly an inferior part of their nature, that prompts them to such indulgence. Their nature, *as a whole*, remonstrates against such indulgence. It is therefore *unnatural*, in the proper sense of that word, and therefore to be condemned and abandoned. [Beattie's Mor. Science.]

“Mad ! (thou reply'st, with indignation fired)  
Of ancient sages proud to tread the step,  
I follow nature.—Follow nature still,  
But look it be thine own :” Is conscience, then,  
No part of nature ? Is she not supreme ?  
Thou regicide ! O raise her from the dead !  
Then follow nature ; and resemble God. YOUNG.

Dr. Chalmers well remarks :—“ We do not urge the proposition that conscience has in every instance the actual direction of human affairs, for this were in the face of all experience. It is not that every man obeys her dictates, but that every man feels he ought to obey them. It is not the reigning, but the rightful authority of conscience, that we, under the name of her supremacy, contend for.”

• [Works, vol. i. pp. 316, 317.]

183. The practical reason for insisting so much upon the natural authority of conscience, is, that it seems in a great measure overlooked by many, who are by no means the worst sort of men. It is thought sufficient to abstain from gross wickedness, and to be humane and kind to such as happen to come in their way. Whereas, in reality, the very constitution of our nature requires, *that we bring our whole conduct before this superior faculty* ; wait its determination ; enforce upon ourselves its authority, and make it the business of our lives, as it is absolutely the whole business of a moral agent, to conform ourselves to it. This is the true meaning of that ancient precept, *reverence thyself*.

[Butler's Preface to his Sermons on Human Nature.]

184. The teaching of the sacred volume is in conformity to the foregoing remarks. In the 14th chapter of Romans it is declared—“ One believeth that he may eat all things : another, who is weak, eateth herbs. One man esteemeth one day above another : another, esteemeth every day alike.” Here, then, are differences, nay, contrarieties of conscientious judgments. In these circum-



stances, Paul says to the parties, "Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind;" that is, let every man be careful to satisfy himself that what he is doing is right. The situation of these parties was, that one *perceived the truth* upon the subject, and the other did not; in the one, the sense of obligation was connected with an accurate, in the other, with an inaccurate opinion.

Thus again:—"I know, and am persuaded by the Lord Jesus, that there is nothing unclean of itself;" therefore, absolutely speaking, it is lawful to eat all things; "but to him that *esteemeth* anything to be unclean, to him it is unclean." That is, it is wrong for any man to violate his own sense of duty. To the doubter, the *sin* of eating was certain, though the act was right in itself.

Again, as a general rule, "He that doubteth, is condemned if he eat, *because* he eateth not of faith; for *whatsoever* is not of faith is sin;" that is, whatever we do which we are not sure is right, is wrong.

[Hodge on Romans xiv.]

185. Men sometimes make light of the authority of conscience. They exclaim: "Every man pleads his conscientious opinions, and that he is bound in conscience to do this or that; and yet his neighbor makes the same plea, and urges the same obligation, to do just the contrary."

186. The alleged fact contained in this remark is true; but it only proves that conscience is not an unerring standard of action, is not alone a safe guide; but it is far from proving that conscience is not an *authoritative* principle, to which we are bound to yield obedience.

#### *Historical Illustration.*

187. A jeweler, of good character and considerable wealth, having occasion, in the way of his business, to travel at some distance from the place of his abode, took along with him a servant, in order to take care of his portmanteau. He had with him some of his best jewels, and a large sum of money, to which his servant was likewise privy.

The master having dismounted, the servant, watching his opportunity, took a pistol from his master's saddle, and shot him dead on the spot; then robbed him of his



jewels and money ; and, hanging a large stone to his neck, he threw him into the nearest canal.

With this booty, he made off to a distant part of the country, where he had reason to believe that neither he nor his master was known. There he began to trade, in a very low way at first that his obscurity might screen him from observation, and, in the course of a good many years, seemed to rise by natural progress of business into wealth and consideration : so that his good fortune appeared at once the effect and the reward of industry and virtue.

Of these he counterfeited the appearance so well that he grew into great credit, married into a good family, and, by laying out his sudden stores discreetly, as he saw occasion, and joining to all a universal affability, he was admitted to a share of the government of the town, and rose from one post to another, till at length he was chosen chief magistrate.

In this office he maintained 'a fair character, and continued to fill it with no small applause, both as a governor and judge ; till one day as he sat upon the bench with some of his brethren, a criminal was brought before him, who was accused of murdering his master.

The evidence came out full, the jury brought in their verdict that the prisoner was guilty, and the whole assembly waited the sentence of the president of the court (which he happened to be that day) with great suspense. Meanwhile he appeared to be in unusual disorder and agitation of mind ; his color changed often, and at length he arose from his seat, and coming down from the bench, placed himself just by the unfortunate man at the bar, to the no small astonishment of all present.

“ You see before you,” said he, addressing himself to those who sat on the bench, “ a striking instance of the just awards of heaven, which, this day, after thirty years’ concealment, presents to you a greater criminal than the man just now found guilty.” He then made an ample confession of his guilt and of all the aggravations of his crime. “ Nor can I feel,” continued he, “ any relief from the agonies of an awakened conscience, but by requiring that justice be forthwith done against me in the most public and solemn manner.”

We may easily suppose the amazement of the whole

assembly, and especially of his fellow judges. However, they proceeded, upon his confession, to pass sentence upon him: and he died with all the manifestations of a penitent mind. [Beauties of History.]

180. What authority belongs to conscience as a director of individual conduct?

181. How does it appear that this faculty has a natural right to regulate the whole human system?

182. What conclusion may be drawn from these facts?

183. What is the practical reason for insisting so much upon the natural authority of conscience?

184. What is the teaching of Scripture respecting the authority of conscience?

185. In what way do men sometimes make light of the authority of conscience?

186. What reply is to be made to such a remark?

187. What historical illustration may be given of the power of conscience?

#### SECTION V.—ON THE IMPERFECTION OF CONSCIENCE.

188. A MAN may act according to his conscience and yet commit a very criminal act. Thefts, frauds, homicides have often been committed in accordance with conscience. *The crime, however, lies not in acting according to conscience, but in the state of mind or course of life which made that appear right which in fact was wrong.*

Men often judge amiss respecting their duties in consequence of their own faults. Some take little pains to ascertain the truth; some voluntarily exclude knowledge; and most persons would possess more accurate perceptions of the moral law if they sufficiently endeavored to obtain them. And, therefore, although a man may not be criminal in performing a given *act* which he ignorantly supposes to be lawful, he may be punished for that ignorance or vice in which his wrong supposition originates.

189. It appears then that men ought to act at all times according to the dictates of conscience when there is no doubt or suspense in their minds: if the case is not clear, it is evident that they should wait till, by the due use of means, they have ascertained what is their duty. If conscience should pronounce anything to be a crime which is not a crime, they ought to abstain because they do not know the judgment to be erroneous, and would not be guiltless if they should act in opposition to it. The reason is, that supposing, as they may, the voice of conscience to be the voice of God, they could not transgress its orders, without expressly

rebelling against what appeared to them to be the authority of God. "There is nothing unclean of itself (no meat); but to him that esteemeth anything to be unclean, to him it is unclean." The apostle Paul (Rom. xiv. 14) is speaking of an action which was not sinful in itself, and yet he declares that it was sinful to the man whose conscience pronounced it to be such. The judgment of conscience does not change the nature of actions, but it changes them to us; because the authority of God seems to us to be interposed either to command or to forbid. In the case to which Paul referred, the sin did not consist properly in the action itself, but in doing it with the persuasion that it was sinful.

[Lectures by Dr. John Dick, vol. ii. p. 270.]

190. The value of conscience as a moral guide has been overrated by some writers in consequence of neglecting to consider the fact that man is in a state of moral depravity, and thus exposed to the undue influence of his appetites and passions, of prejudices and temptations, that tend to obscure and pervert his moral judgment, and to weaken the authority, or rather the power of conscience.

In the account, for instance, that is given, by Dr. Abercrombie, of conscience, as the presiding and regulating power in the moral constitution of man, there does not appear to be an adequate impression of the degree in which that faculty has been affected by the entrance of sin into our world. It would seem to be regarded as having escaped the general depravation, and as still sitting the uncorrupted censor of all the other powers and passions of the soul. But this surely is a great mistake.

191. To the question whether conscience has, in common with other powers, suffered depravation, Dr. Wardlaw, in his *Christian Ethics*, furnishes a full reply, which in substance is as follows:—

Where is "*conscience toward God?*" What are the results of its authority? Let the speedy and universal loss of the original knowledge of the true God answer the question. Let the polytheistic superstitions of heathenism, with all their fooleries, impurities, and cruelties; let the skeptical theism, and the presumptuous atheism of philosophy; let the manifest and conscious ungodliness of the whole race of mankind answer the question.

Even in its dictates toward fellow-creatures, too, how sadly is it under the domination of the appetites, and passions, and selfish desires; how constantly liable to be swayed and bribed to wrong decisions; and how much in danger are even its right judgments of being set aside by the power of such interfering influences. If conscience has not become depraved, how comes it, that this faculty has not, everywhere and always, with authoritative voice, said to man, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God, with all thy heart?" How comes it that it has not always condemned the absence of this love as the most deeply criminal of all the breaches of moral obligation?

The apostle Paul says, "The carnal mind is enmity against God." If, in saying so, he gives the character of *human nature*, there must, in this enmity, be a tendency to influence the decision of the judgment respecting the affections and the conduct due to God; and this depraved state of man must vitiate, more or less, the judgment of mankind on the fundamental principles of morals.

192. Conscience must therefore have a rule. It must be directed by some higher rule than itself. This rule is not the *example* of others, although wise and good, because the best of men are imperfect, and are liable to errors and infirmities.

It may be added that the *opinion* of men is not the rule of conscience, any more than their example, because they may mislead us, either from design or from their own previous error. Hence in the Scriptures we are commanded to call no man master, and to give this honor to Christ alone.

The true rule of conscience, or of moral obligation, will be exhibited in another chapter.

Conscience is only a subordinate rule, to which we are properly under obligation to yield obedience, only when it is conformable to the supreme rule; and the obligation of which we speak, results solely from the supposition of its conformity. An appeal may always be made from its decisions to the Scriptures; and as soon as a difference is discovered between its dictates and those of Scripture, the sentence which it has pronounced is made void.

Hence it is plain that the plea of conscience will not avail to exempt us from guilt and punishment.



188. While it thus appears that a man ought to make his conduct conform to his conscience, and that he is guilty if he act against his moral judgment of what is right, is a man, on the other hand, who acts according to his conscience, always right?

189. What practical direction may guide us in obeying the voice of conscience?

190. What error in the treatment of this subject has been committed by writers, in the main correct?

191. What evidence is there that conscience has, in common with other powers, suffered depravation?

192. Since it appears that conscience is an incompetent and unsafe guide to correct conduct, what becomes necessary?

#### SECTION VI.—INFLUENCE OF REASON ON OUR MORAL DECISIONS.

193. (1.) THE office of reason appears to be, to judge of the expediency, propriety, and consequences of actions, which do not involve any feeling of moral duty.

(2.) In regard to the affections a process of reasoning is often necessary, not only respecting the best mode of exercising them, but also, in many cases, in deciding whether we shall exercise them at all.

(3.) In cases in which an impression of moral duty is concerned, an exercise of reason is still, in many instances, necessary for enabling us to adapt our means to the end which we desire to accomplish.

(4.) Reason is employed in some cases in which one duty appears to interfere with another; likewise in judging whether, in particular instances, any rule of duty is concerned, or whether we are at liberty to take up the case simply as one of expediency or utility.

(5.) Reason is also concerned in judging of a description of cases in which *a difference of moral feeling arises according to the circumstances in which an individual is placed*. Thus we attach a difference of moral sentiment to the act of taking away the life of another,—when this is done by an individual under the impulse of revenge, by the same individual in self-defense—or by a judge in the discharge of his public duty.

(6.) We often speak of man as acting upon reason, as opposed to passion. This only means, that he acts upon a calm consideration of the motives by which he ought to be influenced, instead of being hurried away by a desire or an affection which has been allowed to usurp undue influence.

[Abercrombie.]

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193. What is the influence and office of reason in guiding us to a just decision with regard to our moral conduct?



## BOOK III.

## THE PRINCIPLES AND RULE OF MORAL ACTION AND OBLIGATION.

## CHAPTER I.

## THE DISTINCTIONS OF RIGHT AND WRONG IMMUTABLE AND ETERNAL.

THE being and perfections of God having been proved, it follows that He is the proprietor of all things, and that He is the supreme moral governor of all: we have also shown that there are in the human constitution, in the history of the world, or in the acts of divine providence, abundant intimations of a supreme moral government to which we are accountable.

[See further, Dewar, Moral Phil. vol. ii. pp. 1-25.]

In the preceding chapters it has been shown that man has been made capable of approving certain actions as right, and of disapproving others as wrong. From the constitution of our nature we cannot but mark a difference between virtue and vice, and approve of the one as morally good, and disapprove of the other as morally evil.

194. It is alleged by many skeptical writers, that the distinctions of virtue and vice are mere perceptions or emotions of the mind, and have no existence separate from it. There are also some authors, professedly friendly to the interests of religion, who deny the immutability of moral distinctions, and maintain that they have their sole origin in the enactments of will and power.

Of this description is Dr. Paley, who has followed some writers who preceded him in their most dangerous statements, and has deduced from these statements their most exceptionable consequences.

195. *Dr. Paley's system* advocates the following principles: Whatever is expedient is right. It is the utility of any moral rule alone which constitutes the obligation of it. Actions are to be estimated by their tendency. To be obliged to do an action, according to his view, is

to be urged to it by a violent motive, resulting from the command of another. This motive, he tells us, can be only self-love,—as we are under no obligation to do anything which does not contribute to our interest; so that on the supposition of there being no future state, an action by which we could get nothing would be perfectly indifferent to us. What makes the difference, according to him, between prudence and duty is, that in the one case we consider what we shall get or lose in this world, and in the other, what we shall get or lose in the next. A man, therefore, who does not believe in a future world, or who does not carry his views to it, can have no perception of duty.

196. His system has contributed much to the prevalence of a loose and unscriptural morality. It has led men to disregard the law of God as the only measure and rule of morals, and to substitute, in room of it, their own views of expediency.

197. This question, therefore, whether the distinctions of right and wrong are necessary and inevitable, is to be regarded as fundamentally important in relation to the interests of morality and religion; and is to be answered in the affirmative—that is, it is to be maintained that moral distinctions have a real existence, independent of our perceptions.

198. The argument in favor of this position may be briefly stated thus: The Deity is as necessarily holy and good, as he necessarily exists; he cannot do what is at variance with his infinite goodness and rectitude.

By the will of Deity must be understood, not anything arbitrary, but the act of a mind possessing infinite intelligence as well as power, infinite rectitude as well as goodness. His will does not create moral distinctions, but is the expression of distinctions which eternally and unchangeably exist, and which are *founded in his own nature*. The boundless perfection of his nature is not the effect of his will, but his will is the effect, and, when revealed, the announcement of his supreme and necessary moral excellence.

This is the view which is everywhere given of God in Scripture.

To suppose then that the will of God is the sole origin of the distinctions of right and wrong, shows that the

framers of such a supposition have erroneous views of the necessary and eternal excellence of the divine nature. If such distinctions were erected, and depended, on mere power and enactment, would it not follow, that had God so willed it, what we regard as the differences between moral actions would have been entirely reversed, and good would be put for evil, and evil for good? According to this scheme, there is no justice, no truth, no benevolence essentially in God or in the universe; and the attempt of ascertaining what are the moral attributes of the Deity is rendered unnecessary, since whatever he is, is determined by an act of his will.

How contrary this is to Scripture and to enlightened reason, it is needless to say. It is because the moral excellences of his nature are infinite and unchangeable, that it is the duty of every intelligent creature, *antecedent to all law and all enactment*, to love him supremely; and it is on the same ground that His will must ever be the expression of what is holy, and just, and good. He is, indeed, so absolute that he can do whatever he pleases; but so just that he cannot be pleased to do any unrighteous thing.

We are formed capable of perceiving, and of feeling moral truth; but it is truth which has an existence independently of our perceptions and feelings. Every theory therefore which represents moral distinctions as having no existence apart from the mind that perceives them: that is, which teaches us to regard morality as altogether a matter of sensation or feeling, appears to have a skeptical and dangerous tendency. That a being endowed with certain powers is bound to love and obey the Creator and Preserver of all, is truth, whether I perceive it or not; and we cannot conceive it possible that it can ever be reversed.

[Dewar, vol. ii. pp. 26-33.]

194. Are these distinctions of right and wrong, of virtue and vice, which are thus observed and felt by the human mind, founded in the nature of things and consequently immutable and eternal—in other words, are they included in necessary truth, which is as independent of my constitution, as the equality of the three angles of a triangle to two right angles?

195. What principles are at the foundation of Dr. Paley's system of morals?

196. What, consequently, has been the influence of Dr. Paley's system of moral philosophy?

197. The question returns: Are the distinctions of right and wrong necessary, immutable, and founded in the nature of things?

198. What briefly is the argument in favor of this position?

## CHAPTER II.

## RULE OR LAW OF MORAL OBLIGATION.

199. THE rule, or law, of moral obligation, is the rule or standard by which human conduct ought to be regulated, and conformity to which is virtue or rectitude.

200. This Rule may be ascertained by answering the fundamental question, whether man be a subject of the government of the Deity? If the moral government of God be granted, and the consequent subjection of man to that government, it evidently follows, without an intermediate link of reasoning, that the rule by which his conduct is to be regulated *must be* THE WILL OF THE SUPREME GOVERNOR.

The two propositions, indeed, that *man is a subject of the Divine Governor*, and that *the will of the Divine Governor is his law*, must be regarded as of the same import. If there be a God, he must rule; and if he rules, His will must be law.

201. So far as the law, or rule, of duty is concerned, the only legitimate inquiry is, what is the true way, or ways, of ascertaining, with certainty and correctness, the will of the Supreme Legislator.

202. The moral rectitude or virtue of a subject of God's moral government consists in conformity of principle and conduct, of heart and life, to the will of the Governor; a governor who is necessarily supreme, and whose will, to all his intelligent creatures, is infallible and unimpeachable law.

In accordance with this statement the sacred scripture asserts that "sin is the transgression of law," the law of God; of course virtue must consist in conforming to that law. It also asserts that "to fear God and *keep his commandments* is the *whole duty* of man." "Thus saith the Lord," is regarded as a sufficient and final law.

It also asserts that the will, or command of God is the rule of obedience to all intelligent creatures. It is the rule to angels; "Bless the Lord, ye his angels, that excel in strength, *that do his commandments*, hearkening unto the



voice of his word." It was the rule to our Savior when he sojourned among men. "My meat," he said, "is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work." To the rule which directs angels, and which directed our Redeemer, it is right that we should conform.

203. This will of God is *wise* and *just*, and there would be impiety in supposing that there could be any obliquity or irregularity in the conduct which it prescribes.

As it is wise and righteous, so it is *good* and *beneficent*, always aiming at our welfare, as well as the glory of our Maker; for the tendency of all the commands which it issues is to promote the order and happiness of the universe.

It is the will of the *Creator*, to which creatures should bow with profound reverence. It is the will of a *Master*, whom his servants ought to obey. It is the will of a *Father*, which his children should regard not only with respect, but with gratitude.

204. Some notions of morality are found among those who do not enjoy the advantages of revelation; and these are accompanied with a sense of obligation: that is, there is a conviction in the minds of men that they ought to do some things, and ought not to do other things. There remain treatises on morals drawn up by the Greeks and Romans, in perusing which, while we observe many defects, we cannot but admire the progress which they had made in the investigation of the various classes of relative duties.

It is evident too, that conscience performed its office among them, not only from particular instances of its power in disquieting and alarming certain distinguished transgressors, but from express references to it, and their recorded declarations, that some actions were pleasing, and others were offensive to the gods.

205. The speculative morality of the heathen may be conceived to have been handed down to them by tradition, to be in part the voice of that law which we must believe was given to our first parents, and revived by subsequent revelations, still speaking to men by the lips of their progenitors and teachers, who have inculcated from age to age the precepts which had been delivered to themselves by a preceding race.

It may be supposed, again, to be, in part, the result of

reasoning; a discovery made by the mental faculties employed in contemplating the principles, feelings, and instincts of human nature, and the circumstances in which it is placed, and in deducing inferences from them. This, however, is the work only of a few superior minds, and will not account for the existence of moral sentiments among all classes of men.

Another source of their knowledge of moral rules, is the capacity of the human mind for perceiving the propriety and impropriety of certain actions, and for making them the objects of approbation and disapprobation.

[Wardlaw.]

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199. What is understood by the rule or law of moral obligation?

200. How is this rule to be ascertained?

201. What then, in all theories of morals, so far as the rule of duty is concerned, is the only legitimate inquiry?

202. In what then does the virtue or moral rectitude of a subject of God's moral government consist?

203. What are the characteristics of this supreme rule of obligation?

204. Is the will of God made known by the light of nature?

205. How may the speculative morality of heathen be more particularly accounted for?

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### CHAPTER III.

#### ORIGIN, OR ULTIMATE GROUND, OF MORAL RECTITUDE, AND OBLIGATION.

206. To the question, Why should I pursue one course of action rather than another? the following answers are returned:—One says, Because it is right; another, Because it is conformable to reason and nature; a third, Because it is conformable to truth; a fourth, Because it is agreeable to the fitness of things: and a fifth, Because it contributes to the general good.

##### *I. Fitness of Things as a Ground of Obligation.*

207. From its abstruseness, the fitness of things could never be intended as the ground of obligation to mankind at large, for they are incapable of understanding it.

Moreover, it properly constitutes no moral obligation at all. There is no moral obligation but from a law, and

no law except from the will of a superior. If a man act contrary to the fitness of things, you may pronounce him unreasonable, but you cannot call him criminal. He may subject himself to inconvenience or suffering; but he is only unwise. The truth is, that the fitness of things as a rule of duty is an expression without meaning, and is used in an intelligible sense only when used to denote the institution of things by the will of the Creator, from which the duties of his creatures naturally flow. But when thus explained, the fitness of things and the will of God signify the same thing; the fitness, the relation, or the order of things, being the medium by which he has intimated his will.

[Dick's Lectures.]

## II. *Obligation as resulting from Utility.*

208. It is the doctrine of Paley that "actions are to be estimated by their tendency;" that "whatever is expedient is right;" that "it is the utility of any moral rule alone which constitutes the obligation of it." But in regard to this doctrine we remark (1.), that to hold utility to be the foundation of morals, is to ascribe to men more comprehensive views than they actually possess; we are not competent judges of what is, upon the whole, good for the world. It is a principle too unwieldy for our grasp, and extremely apt to be abused by the substitution of particular for general good.

(2.) If *expediency* be the only rule of action, and if every man is to judge for himself (as Paley admits) concerning the utility of his own conduct, may not the perjurer, and the assassin, and others, be persuaded, each in his own mind, that his actions are, in their consequences, beneficial, and entitled to reward?

Expediency has been alleged in justification of the greatest inhumanity and injustice. It has been acted on by persecutors and tyrants in every age. It has been the rule of conduct to all who have found a courtly morality convenient. The Inquisition referred to it for its vindication in the cruelties which it inflicted, and in the fires which it kindled. That society which is most dangerous to the virtue and happiness of mankind—the Jesuits—have made this the foundation of their pernicious maxims, their intriguing counsels, and unchristian compliances.

In the preceding chapter was shown the necessity of

adopting the laws which God has revealed in the Scriptures as the rule of duty. But if it was necessary that God should prescribe a law to his creatures, by which they should regulate their moral feelings and actions, it follows, that this law alone must be the test and criterion of duty, to the exclusion of every principle which man may be disposed to substitute in its room.

[Dick's Lectures ; Dewar, vol. ii. pp. 51-55.]

It may be added (3.) that there are certain dispositions of mind and certain actions, which are in themselves approved or disapproved by mankind, abstracted from the consideration of their tendency to the happiness or misery of the world ; approved or disapproved by that principle which is the guide of life, the judge of right and wrong.

Who has ever withheld his admiration from Leonidas and his chosen band, till he has thought of the good which their example in all coming ages was to confer on the world ? Who has hesitated to approve of the child that has diminished her own comforts and impaired her health in ministering to a sick parent—who, in contemplating such virtue, has been able to deny his approbation till he had calculated the advantages that were to arise from it ?

(4.) Before the truth of the theory of utility can be proved, the moral constitution of man must be altered. That theory, however modified, and however disguised, goes to establish the doctrine that the whole of morality is a system of unmingled selfishness—an affair of either profit or loss to ourselves or to others. Hence Dr. Paley maintains that the sole obligation to virtue consists in an exclusive regard to our own individual eternity of happiness ; and that virtue itself consists in obedience to the will of the Supreme Being ; which obedience is to be given, not on account of the infinite moral excellences and perfections of his nature, nor because of his creating and preserving goodness, but merely on account of his power to give or withhold the happiness which is our object.

The doctrine of Paley, which thus represents the sole motive to virtue to be the happiness of the agent himself, is false ; for we find, by appealing to our consciences, a part of the moral constitution which God has given us, and which constitutes a strong expression of His will, that moral agents rise in our estimation just in proportion as



they keep themselves out of sight in the good actions they perform.

Again (5.), it is an error to confound, as this theory of utility does, the effects of a law with the reasons of it; for it by no means follows, because moral laws are productive of happiness, that they have no other cause, and were intended to accomplish no other design. They may result from the nature of things, or the relations which subsist in the universe; and the good resulting from them may not be their ultimate end, but a consequence of the benevolence which gave existence to the system of Creation.

(6.) That in creating the world, and in conducting his government in regard to it, the object of the Deity is the good or happiness of the universe, is a position in which all, according to this general statement of it, will readily acquiesce. It is highly probable, however, from the deductions of reason, and it is fully established by Scripture, that in connection with this object he had in view his own glory, or the illustrious manifestation of the fullness of the divine nature.

We cannot, indeed, conceive that a being of infinite purity and rectitude, who is the Supreme Ruler of his accountable creatures, as well as their Creator, would make their happiness, in whatever way they might choose to enjoy it, the object of his care without regard to the justice by which his government is conducted. As the Judge of all, he must do right, though his doing so involves in it the punishment, and consequently the misery of transgressors. We approve of his procedure in such a case as in itself right, without at all thinking of the useful consequences that may result from it.

While the Deity seeks the happiness of the universe, it is in subordination to the manifestation of the moral glories of his nature and in connection with the improvement of his creatures in virtue. The exercise of his justice, not less than of his goodness, is implied in His government of intelligent and accountable creatures.

Dr. Dewar has also shown that the principle of expediency is false from its opposition to divine revelation, and also that it is not countenanced by the Scripture doctrine of rewards.—Vol. ii. pp. 51–60.

III. *The Will of God as the Ground of Obligation.*

209. Some have maintained that the whole moral law originated in the will of God ; that the duties enjoined in it are right, solely because he has commanded them ; and that, if he had so pleased, our duty might have been made to consist in actions different or contrary.

The error of this doctrine will be discovered on simply asking the question, whether God could have exempted us from the duty of loving himself, or have made it our duty to hate him ; and whether the same change might have taken place with respect to the love of our neighbor ?

Others have run into the opposite error, and maintained that the whole moral law is founded in the nature of things ; and, consequently, that no part of it could be altered. It is exactly what it must always be, while God and man continue the same.

The true doctrine lies between those stated, and is this : that although the moral law in general is founded on the nature of things, or on the relations of man to his Maker, and to his fellow-creatures, yet some particulars are the subject of positive institution. For example, the fourth commandment is acknowledged to be partly moral and partly positive : moral, as it requires the consecration of a part of our time to the immediate service of God ; positive, as it appropriates a seventh part of it rather than some other proportion. As another example, the law respecting marriage may be referred to, by which the relation is forbidden to persons standing in certain degrees of consanguinity and affinity. The prohibition is implied in the seventh commandment. Whatever reason may be assigned for the prohibition, we cannot consider it as of the same immutable obligation with the precept not to steal, or not to lie. It may be dispensed with, not by human authority, but by the Supreme Lawgiver ; and accordingly, marriages within the forbidden degrees have been contracted with his express approbation. In the beginning of the world, the sons of Adam married their sisters, and, by the Mosaic law, if a man died without issue, his brother was required to marry his widow. Such marriages are now held to be incestuous.

We may therefore say, that there is a mixture of moral

and positive in the Decalogue; and there is truth in the old observation, that some things are commanded because they are just, and some are just because they are commanded. Those which are just because they are commanded may be altered by the same will which enacted them; but those which are commanded because they are just, are of perpetual obligation.

210. While to God's creatures his will is the *immediate* rule of duty and ground of obligation, yet in its legislative prescriptions that will is not capricious and arbitrary. There must be certain principles by which it is itself determined, conformity to which is what, in his estimation, constitutes right, and disconformity wrong; and by which, consequently, the rules of duty prescribed by him to his intelligent offspring are dictated. Such rules, therefore, should be regarded as right, not simply because God wills them, but the correct sentiment is, that God wills them because they are right. The principles by which the divine will is actuated in issuing moral rules are seated in the divine nature, are eternal, unchangeable, and exist of necessity. By these principles also was he guided in the formation of the universe, in fixing the constitutions, allotting the circumstances, and adjusting the mutual relations of all his creatures. Hence these principles are the *ultimate* ground or reason of moral obligation.

211. IV. In support of the doctrine that the divine nature, and not the divine will, is the ultimate origin and ground of rectitude, Dr. Chalmers eloquently says:

"We must express our dissent from the system of those who would resolve virtue, not into any native or independent rightness of its own, but into the will of Him who has a right to all our services. Without disparagement to the Supreme Being, it is not His *law* which *constitutes* virtue; but, far higher homage to Him and to His law, the law derives all its authority and its being from a virtue of anterior residence in the *character of the Divinity*.

"It is not by the authority of any law over Him, that truth, and justice, and goodness, and all the other perfections of supreme moral excellence have, in His person, had their everlasting residence. He had a nature, before he uttered it forth into a law. Previous to Creation, there existed in His mind, all those conceptions of the

great and the graceful, which he hath embodied into a gorgeous universe. In like manner, previous to all government, there existed in His mind those principles of righteousness, which afterward, with the right of an absolute sovereign, he proclaimed into a law. Those virtues of which we now read on a tablet of jurisprudence were all transcribed and taken off from the previously existing tablet of the divine character. In the fashioning of law, he pictured forth Himself; and we, in the act of observing his law, are only conforming ourselves to his likeness. It is there that we are to look for the primeval seat of moral goodness—or, in other words, *virtue has an inherent character of her own*—apart from law, and anterior to all jurisdiction.

“Instead therefore of deriving morality from law, we should derive law, even the law of God, from the primeval morality of his own character; and so far from looking upwardly to his *law* as the original fountain of morality, do we hold it to be the emanation from a higher fountain, that is seated in the depths of his unchangeable essence, and is eternal as the nature of the Godhead. There was an inherent, before there was a preceptive morality; and righteousness, and goodness, and truth, which all are imperative enactments of law, were all prior characteristics in the underived and uncreated excellence of the lawgiver.”

212. V. Moral obligation in the Deity results from the strength of his approbation for what is good, and the strength of his consequent recoil from that which is wrong. It is not however, as with us, an obligation that bears upon him from without. There is no jurisdiction foreign to himself, which can take cognizance of Him. Obligation as acting upon Him is approbation, of a strength and power that carry it up to the degree of a moral necessity.

But obligation acting upon *us*, while the term may be applied, and often is, to the force of those sanctions which virtue has even in the workings of our own conscience, has more strictly a reference to the sanctions of that divine government which is set up in authority over us.

213. VI. An act is said to be right, because of its moral propriety: it is said to be obligatory, because of the sanctions, whether of reward or penalty, that bind to the doing of it. The distinction is clearly exemplified in



civil law, under which there are many actions that are obligatory in the strictest sense of the term, but many more which morally are right, but legally are not at all binding. Under the divine government the term obligation is used in the same forensic sense, but with this important difference, that it is not restricted to the enforcement of justice alone. God has framed a code not of equity alone, but of universal morality. Under Him those moralities which are left free, and ought to be in the administrations of an earthly jurisprudence, have become so many imperative enactments, which at our peril we disobey, inasmuch that the affections as well as the acts of humanity are legalized.

214. When God bids us do what before was a matter of indifference, it thence becomes a matter of obligation; and that, not more from his right of command than from the rightness of our obedience. When he bids us do what before was felt on our part to be an act of virtue, he only attaches one obligation more to the performance of it. It did not for the first time become virtuous, at the moment he embarked his authority in its favor. But he may be said to have rendered it more an act of virtue than it was before. He superadded upon it one rightness to another, which is by no means a singularity in the affairs of human conduct. When God interposes with the expression of his will on the side of a morality, there is then added to the call of morality the call of godliness.

This should suffice for the question whether virtue have a rightness in itself, or if all its rightness be only derived from the will of God. It will be perceived that virtue hath a higher original than the will of God, even the character of God—or those principles in the constitution of the Deity which give direction to his will. Long ere virtue passed into a law for the government of those who are created, had it a residence and a being in the mind of the Creator; and the tablet of his jurisprudence is but a transcript from the tablet of his own independent nature.

To have a nature like unto His, we must love virtue for itself; and do it because it is right—not because it is the requisition of authority.

If any are afraid that this doctrine casts us loose from the authority of God, we suggest to them that a deference to this authority is the highest of all rightness. We

affirm that when virtue, though in its own original and independent character, hath taken possession of the heart, its first and largest offering will be to the Divinity who inspired it. [Dick's Lectures; Chalmers' Works, vol. v.]

206. If I ask, why I should pursue one course of action rather than another, what answers are returned?

207. What may be said of the fitness of things, as a ground of moral obligation?

208. What may be said of obligation as resulting from utility, or the tendency of actions to promote the general good?

209. What may be said of the will of God as the ground of obligation?

210. Is the will of God capricious and arbitrary, or is it determined by certain fixed and just principles?

211. In what light has Dr. Chalmers set forth the doctrine that the divine nature, and not the divine will, is the ultimate origin and ground of rectitude?

212. Since the origin and the ultimate standard of moral rectitude are found in the divine nature, whence results moral obligation?

213. How may the rightness and the moral obligation of a given act be distinguished?

214. Is there not an obligation to do a right thing from the fact of its being right, as well as from its being the subject of divine command?

## CHAPTER IV.

### MORAL QUALITIES OF HUMAN ACTION.

215. HUMAN actions may be distinguished into *external* and *internal*. The word *action*, in the most general manner, may be applied to any exercise of the external or internal faculties of man. We often distinguish *actions* from *words*, as when we say a man's actions contradict his words. Yet, in a more general sense, we include a man's words in his actions.

216. We direct our *thoughts* to an action which we are about to perform; we *intend* to do it; we make it our *aim*; we place it before us, and act with purpose (*propositum*); we *design* it, or mark it out beforehand (*designo*).

Will, or volition, is the last step of intention, the first step of action. It is the internal act which leads to external acts.

An action that proceeds from my will, or volition, is my act. But if it do not proceed from my will, it is not my act, though my limbs may be employed in it; as for

instance, if my hand, moved by another man whose strength overmasters mine, strikes a blow. In such a case I am not a free agent. Human actions suppose the freedom of the agent.

217. Actions may lead to events, as causes to effects; they may have *consequences*, immediate or remote. Theft is an action which may have the gain of a few dollars for its immediate, and imprisonment and shame for its remote consequence.

An *end* is a consequence intended, aimed at, purposed, designed. When we act with purpose, we have an end, to which the action is a *means*. To possess the fruit being my end, I purposely cultivate the plant as the means.

218. In the process antecedent to an external action, the characteristic of right or wrong cannot be predicated at that point where the appetites or affections of our nature solicit from the will a particular movement; neither is it at that point where either a rational self-love or a sense of duty remonstrates against it. It is not at that point where the consent of the will is pleaded for, on the one side or other; but, all-important to be borne in mind, it is at that point where the consent is given.

219. That an action may be pronounced moral or immoral; that it may be the rightful object either of moral censure or approval, it must have had the consent of the will to go along with it. It must be the fruit of a volition; else it is utterly beyond the scope, either of praise for its virtuousness, or of blame for its criminality. If an action be involuntary, it is as unfit a subject for a moral reckoning as the pulsations of the wrist, or the height of one's stature.

220. We regard compassion as a virtuous sensibility, and we regard malignity, or licentiousness, or envy, as so many depraved affections; and yet, on our principle, they are virtuous or vicious, only in so far as they are dependent on the will. It is clearly at the bidding of his will that a man acts with his hand, and therefore we are at no loss to hold him responsible for his doings; but we must learn how it is at the bidding of his will that he feels with his heart, ere we can hold him responsible for his desires.

We hold him responsible for his emotions because they are subordinated to the will; not immediately, indeed, but mediately, since we have the power of directing our at-

tention to, or away from, those objects which produce emotion. It is the control which the will has over the attention, or looking faculty, of the mind, that makes man responsible for the objects which he chooses to entertain, and so responsible for the emotions which pathologically result from them.

We are now considering not that which is necessary to the virtuousness of a deed, but of the doer.

221. There are two axioms in regard to the virtuousness of an agent. The first is, that what he does cannot be characterized as having been done virtuously, unless it be done voluntarily.

The other indispensable condition is, that, to be done virtuously, it must be done because of its virtuousness; or its virtuousness must be the prompting consideration which led to the doing of it.

222. It is not volition alone which makes a thing virtuous, but *volition under a sense of duty*; and that only is a moral performance to which a man is urged by the sense or feeling of a moral obligation. It may be done at the bidding of inclination; but without this, it is not done at the bidding of principle; it is not virtuous.

It is not every sort of volition that is moral,—that is a matter of moral censure or moral approbation. I will to visit Switzerland, and I may do it under the impulse of a love for its wild and alpine solitudes. Such a volition indicates the man of taste. Or, I may be so fascinated and detained by the luxury of such contemplations, that I resolve upon an additional month of residence in the midst of them. This too is a volition, and still it is my taste for scenery that has excited it. In the course of my rambles, I may enter one of its cottages, and there may be arrested by some piteous spectacle of family distress; and when once seized upon by the emotion of compassion, I might both prove that I had an eye for pity, and a hand open as day for melting charity. The part which the eye performs is not voluntary, nor would we therefore speak of it as serving at all to make up a moral exhibition. The part which the hand performs is voluntary; and yet done, as it might altogether be, under the impulse of compassion, and of that alone, there might, even in this part of the exhibition, be naught that is strictly and properly of a virtuous character. It might be wholly a thing of emo-



tion, and not at all a thing of moral principle, though a matter of responsibility.

Those actions which flow from taste, prove a man of taste; those which flow from sensibility, mark the performer to be a man of sensibility; those to which he is driven under some headlong impulse of emotion, show him to have been under the influence of a resistless pathology. But only those actions which he does under a sense of their moral obligation or rectitude, and because he apprehends them to be moral, bespeak him to be a man of virtue.

*Whatever cometh not of a sense of duty hath no moral character in itself, and no moral approbation due to it.* The action, we have already said, must be voluntary; but it must be more, else there is no distinction in regard to character between one voluntary performance and another.

223. It must be done because the performer knows it to be virtuous, and because he aims in the doing of it, not to do what he inclines, but to do what he ought. It may so happen that the impulse of duty and the impulse of some constitutional inclination act together like two conspiring forces; in which case the duty will be all the easier, and all the more delightful. But had it been otherwise; had the inclination and the principle acted adversely and as conflicting forces, the latter, if the result of the struggle is to be a virtuous action, must prevail.

[Chalmers' Works, vol. v. pp. 165-195.]

224. We have seen that by an act of will we may transport ourselves within the sphere of the emotions, and for the purpose of yielding ourselves to every impulse that we approve of; the influence of the will being thus anterior to the emotions.

But it has an influence also among the emotions after they are thus originated, in regulating, sustaining, or controlling them, which stamps upon them a moral character.

When proper emotions and affections are cultivated under a sense of duty, they acquire from this source a moral character which of themselves they could not possess.

This subject is more fully discussed in the chapter upon the duty of cultivating the affections.

225. The *opinion of the agent* in doing an action, gives it its moral denomination. If he does an action materially good, without any belief of its being good, but from some other principle, it is no good action in him. And if he does it with the belief of its being ill, it is ill in him.

Thus, if a man give to his neighbor a potion which he really believes will poison him, but which in the event proves salutary, and does much good; in moral estimation he is a poisoner, and not a benefactor. Hence the moral character of an act is not to be determined by the *consequences* that may result from it, but from the consequences that were intended.

226. Benevolence is not the only virtue. It is true that every virtue tends to public, as well as private good; and that whatever is done with a view to promote happiness, without doing injury, is well done, and a proof of goodness in the agent.

It is also true, that every act of virtue, even the most secret that we can perform, tends eventually to the good of others; either by diffusing happiness immediately, or by improving our nature, and consequently making us more useful and more agreeable members of the community.

Yet every moralist allows, that there are duties which a man owes to himself: in the deepest solitude we are not exempted from religious and moral obligation. For if a man were in the condition in which, according to the fable, Robinson Crusoe is said to have been, and confined for many years in a desert island, without having it in his power to do either good or harm to others of his species, he would, according to the measure of rationality that had been given him, be as really a moral being and accountable to God and his conscience for his behavior, as if he were in London or New-York. In such solitude, it would be in his power, in various ways, to be virtuous or vicious. He might impiously repine at the dispensations of providence, or he might acquiesce in them with thankfulness and humility. He might lead a life of industry, or abandon himself to idleness and all other sensualities that were within his reach. He might envy the prosperity of others; or he might pray for their happiness, and wish for opportunities to promote it.

In a word, *benevolence is not the only virtue*: but there can be no virtue in a being who is destitute of it.

227. Dr. Paley says, "Whatever is expedient, is right:" for, according to his doctrine, actions are right or wrong, according to their *tendency*, and not in themselves. But according to the common language and apprehensions of men, an act may be expedient, and yet be a very wrong act; since the term expedient is always used, not in the general sense intended by Dr. Paley, but in a limited sense. Thus, it may be expedient for a man to lie, in order to free himself from captivity. He may stay in captivity, because he will not tell a lie. Now in this latter case we say, he does what is right, and rejects what is expedient. *Expedient* implies, according to its etymology, a way out of difficulties. But morality places before us a higher object than merely to escape from difficulties. She teaches us to aim at what is *right*. What is expedient, may be expedient as a means to what is right. It may be expedient to tell the truth, in order to rescue an innocent person from death. But we do not describe such an action properly by calling it expedient. It is much more than expedient: it is right, it is recommended by duty. It is approved.

228. The abuse to which the adoption of the principle of expediency would be generally liable, is thus illustrated by Mr. Dymond.—"Whatever is expedient, is right," soliloquizes the moonlight adventurer into the poultry-yard: "it will tend more to the sum of human happiness that my wife and I should dine on a capon, than that the farmer should feel the satisfaction of possessing it;"—and so he mounts the henroost. I do not say that this hungry moralist would reason soundly, but I say that he would not listen to the philosophy which replied, "Oh, your reasoning is incomplete; you must take into account all consequences, collateral and remote; and then you will find that it is more expedient, upon the whole, and at the long run, that you and your wife should be hungry, than that henroosts should be insecure."

229. *To constitute an action good in itself*, it must be enjoined by the law of God, the highest rule of duty. The command of man cannot make a work good, unless it be at the same time virtually or explicitly commanded by God: the suggestions of reason do not possess sufficient authority, because it is not our supreme guide, and

is liable to error. He who created us has alone a right to prescribe the mode in which we should exert our faculties, and fulfill the purposes of our being.

230. We cannot decide upon the moral character of an external act without ascertaining the motive or intention of the agent. It is not the outward action merely that we approve or disapprove. A man may kill another by accident, or may kill another by design; and in both cases the outward action may be the same; the firing of a musket may do either. But, in the former case, the manslayer may be entirely innocent; in the latter, he may be guilty of murder: for in the latter, there may be a criminal purpose; in the former, there is, or may be, none. Our affections therefore, dispositions, motives, purposes, or intentions, are the real objects of moral approbation or disapprobation.

The *outward actions* we consider as the *signs and proofs of what was in the mind of the agent*; for man cannot see the heart: and we call an action immoral or virtuous, according as it seems to us to manifest a criminal or a virtuous intention.

231. Independent of all action, it is, in truth, the state of the heart itself which forms our character in the sight of God. With our fellow-creatures, actions must ever hold the first rank: because by these only we can judge of one another; by these we affect each other's welfare, and therefore to these alone the regulation of human law extends. But in the eye of the Supreme Being, to whom our whole internal frame is uncovered, dispositions hold the place of actions; and it is not so much what we perform, as the motive which moves us to performance, that constitutes us good or evil in his sight.

232. Even among men the morality of actions is estimated by the principle from which they are judged to proceed. One man, for instance, may spend much of his fortune in charitable actions; and yet if he is believed to be influenced by mere ostentation, he is deemed not charitable, but vain. Another man may labor unweariedly to serve the public; but if he is prompted by the desire of rising into power, he is held not to be public-spirited, but ambitious; and if he bestows a benefit, merely that he may receive a greater in return, no man would reckon him generous, but selfish and interested.



Hence the rectification of our principles of action, is the primary object of moral and religious discipline.

233. There may be virtue or vice in our intentions themselves, though not exerted in outward acts. He who forms a purpose to commit murder, has already incurred the guilt of murder; and he who does all the good he can, and wishes he was able to do more, is virtuous in proportion to the extent of his wishes, however small his abilities may be.

234. It is the false maxim of some that "the end justifies the means," and there are those who excuse themselves, and even claim praise, when they have erred, on account of the alleged purity of their motives.

In regard to this maxim and this excuse, it is acknowledged that *an action good in itself may become bad through intention*; or, in other words, it may be divested of all moral worth by being performed with an unlawful design, and the agent may be guilty of crime. The giving of alms is not a virtue when it flows from ostentation; nor zeal for truth, when it originates in pride and passion.

235. To ascribe to intention the power of turning a bad action into a good one, is to deny that there is any essential difference of actions, to render morality entirely an arbitrary thing, to represent it as continually changing its character, so that what is vicious to-day may be virtuous to-morrow. It sets aside the law of God, and substitutes in the room of a permanent standard the ever-varying decisions of the human mind, blinded by prejudice, warped by passion, and forming its judgments upon deceitful appearances and short-sighted calculations.

236. The only province which ought to be assigned to intention, in morality, is to give value to such actions as are conformable to the law of God, to the goodness of which it is indispensably necessary that the state of the mind be right.

It is sufficient to explode the false doctrine of intention to consider the extent to which it would carry us; for upon this principle, many of the greatest crimes might be justified, because those who committed them imagined that they were doing their duty.

237. To render an action good, as before remarked in substance, it must be an action which God has implicitly or explicitly commanded; it must be done, not because

it will please ourselves or others, but because it is commanded by God; it must flow from the love of God, and therefore done willingly and cheerfully; it must be done for the glory or honor of God, and not for a selfish end.

[Lectures of Dr. John Dick, vol. ii. pp. 254-9.]

238. From the preceding positions it is an obvious inference, that *actions truly, and in the highest sense good, can be performed only by those who believe, and live under the influence of, the Bible*; and also that the boasted virtues of the heathen will not endure a thorough investigation. In the language of Dr. Dick, "It is intolerable to hear Christians giving the name of virtue to the mere exercise of the natural affections without any religious motive; to acts of natural courage; to patriotism, as it is commonly understood, and was exemplified among the Greeks and Romans; to a proud morality, which elated the possessors with self-conceit, and led them to claim an equality, or a superiority to the gods." The heathen, being ignorant of the true God, evidently could not perform actions possessing the characteristics described above.

239. The words of the apostle Peter to Cornelius may here be objected. "Of a truth, I perceive that God is no respecter of persons; but, in every nation, he that feareth him and worketh righteousness, is accepted of him." But these words, as the context shows, do not teach that men of every nation work righteousness; but that, to whatever nation those who work righteousness belong, they are accepted. This is evident; for the apostle is speaking in reference to the prejudices of the Jews, who believed that they were the objects of the divine favor, to the exclusion of every other people. This he now discovered to be an error; for, in the case of Cornelius, God had shown, that if there were any righteous Gentiles, they also were acceptable to him. But Cornelius, let it be remembered, was not such a Gentile as Socrates, or Cato, or Aristides, but one who knew the true God and worshiped him.

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215. How are human actions distinguished?

216. What are the steps leading to action?

217. What is the tendency of actions?

218. In what part of the process antecedent to an external action does the characteristic of right or wrong first become applicable?

219. What then is essential to the moral character of a human action?

220. Is any moral character attached to our emotions, with which the

will seems to have little or nothing to do? And since we have affirmed that nothing is either virtuous or vicious, unless the voluntary in some way intermingles with it, how shall we vindicate the moral rank which is commonly assigned to the mere susceptibilities of our nature?

221. What two axioms may be stated in regard to the virtuousness of the agent who performs a given act?

222. Is volition alone sufficient therefore to make a thing virtuous?

223. What then is the specific distinction of a voluntary action which is virtuous?

224. What further influence, beside that already described, has the will on the emotions, by which they acquire a moral character?

225. What effect upon the moral character of an action has the opinion of the agent in doing it?

226. Is the allegation true, that there are no good affections or actions but those which have a benevolent tendency?

227. Are actions right simply because they are expedient?

228. How has Mr. Dymond illustrated the abuse to which the adoption of the principle of expediency would be generally liable?

229. What is necessary to constitute an action absolutely or materially good, or good in itself?

230. Does the character of an action depend upon the intention of the agent?

231. How is this matter regarded by the Supreme Being?

232. How does it appear that even among men, the morality of actions is estimated by the principle from which they are judged to proceed, and that such as the principle is, the man is accounted to be?

233. May there be virtue or vice in our intentions themselves, though not exerted in outward acts?

234. Does the character of an action so depend upon the intention, that a good intention will justify the means employed to execute it?

235. But although intention may convert good into evil, does it possess the opposite power of turning evil into good, of infusing a moral goodness into an act otherwise evil?

236. What province should, in morality, be assigned to intention?

237. What is necessary to render an action good in the sight of God?

238. What inference may be drawn from the preceding positions?

239. Do not the words of Peter to Cornelius (Acts x. 34, 35) prove that the works of the heathen, as well as those of Christians, are pleasing to God?

## BOOK IV.

## THE RIGHTS OF MAN.

## CHAPTER I.

## RIGHTS AND OBLIGATIONS—THEIR NATURE.

240. WHATEVER action we would deem either virtuous or innocent were it done by an agent in certain circumstances, we say he has a *right* to do it. Whatever one so possesses and enjoys in certain circumstances that we would deem it a wrong action in any other to disturb or interrupt his possession, we say 'tis *his right*, or he has a *right* to enjoy and possess it. Whatever demand one has upon another in such circumstances that we would deem it wrong conduct in that other not to comply with it, we say one has a *right* to what is thus demanded.

[Hutchinson.]

According to Dr. Reid, "The term *right* is a term of art in law, and signifies all that a man may lawfully do, all that he may lawfully possess and use, and all that he may lawfully claim of any other person."

241. *Natural jurisprudence* is a code of relative duty, deriving its authority from impressions which are found in the moral feelings of all mankind, without regard to the enactments of any particular civil society.

242. The whole *object of law* is to protect men in all that they may lawfully *do*, or *possess*, or *demand*; hence civilians have defined the word *jus* or *right*, to be a lawful claim to do anything, to possess anything, or to demand something from some other person.

243. The ambiguity existing in the use of the word *right*, may be seen in the following instance, stated by Dr. Chalmers:—

I may have a right to a given property, which, however, being in the use and possession of a poor relative who would suffer by the deprivation, it may not be right



for me to exact it from the industrious father of a sinking and industrious family.

There is therefore a difference between a legal right and a moral rightness. A claim may rightfully belong to me, and I can therefore prosecute it at law, and yet it may be extremely right in me to postpone, if not altogether to relinquish it. I may have a right to prosecute, and yet it may not be right in me to enter on the prosecution. It may thus be altogether wrong to insist upon a right.

244. The existing jurisprudence of society ought not to be complained of because there are many things morally right which it has not made legally binding, and many things most offensively wrong which it does not punish: because there would be no scope for the generousities of our nature, if man were not left at liberty, either to insist upon his claims, or to forbear them at his pleasure. It would supersede the need of compassion, if, upon every occasion when it were right for it to come forth with its willing dispensations, law also came forth with the authoritative declaration that they were altogether due; thereby turning that which ought to be a matter of free indulgence, into a matter of strict and legal necessity, and thereby also destroying motives to industry and economy in the poor, and the feeling of gratitude when relieved by law.

245. But while the right and the rightness are separable in regard to the holder of the right, they are not so in regard to the other party. Though it be sometimes right for the creditor to forbear the prosecution of a debt, yet it is right for the debtor to strain his labor and his frugality to the utmost, in order to make out the payment. I may have a right over another man which it might be very wrong for me to act upon. But if another man have a right over me, it is never wrong, it is right, for me to act upon it. It is not at all times right in a man to proceed to the very uttermost of law upon his own right; but at all times right in him to defer the very uttermost to the rights of others.

246. The *counterpart of a right* upon one side, is an *obligation* on the other. If a man have a right to my services, I am under an obligation to render them. The *counterpart* again of a *rightness*, is not obligation, but

*approbation*. If a man show a right over me, it is my obligation and my part to submit to it. If any man show a rightness before me, it is my part to approve of it, and it is my *duty* to do it.

247. Duty is a wider term than obligation; just as right, the adjective, is wider than right, the substantive; as when we say that a poor man has no right to relief, yet it is right he should have it.

My obligation is to give another man his right; my duty is to do what is right. The word obligation is not, however, used always in so narrow a sense, but is extended to the same limits as duty.

It is our duty to observe all rectitude, though there existed no being in the universe who had a right to enjoin the performance of it. It may be our *duty* to give to a needy person, though the thing given is in no way his *due*. It may be my duty to forgive a guilty person, though to say that forgiveness was his due would be a contradiction in terms.

The terms right and rightness, though distinct, appear to be closely associated in the minds of men. It may be that I *ought* to give to another a sum of money which I do not *owe* him. We do not *owe* a man forgiveness, when at the same time we *ought* to forgive him.

There is a distinction then between duty regarded in the light of moral propriety or rectitude, and duty regarded in the light of moral obligation.

If we look to morality only as it operates in human society and without reference to the Supreme Being, then we have many a rightness without a corresponding right; many duties which on my part should be performed, but not one of which is *due* to any living creature; many actions that may be the object of praise, and yet are not at all the matters of obligation. They are virtuous, and yet I am not bound to do them.

But God, who has an absolute property in us, and an absolute power over us, and whose will is on the side of virtue, has by his rightful authority turned proprieties and moralities into precepts: he has commanded them to be observed, and has thus brought them within the limits of moral obligation.

What our moral faculty recommends as so many proprieties, the law of God enjoins as so many precepts. In

virtue of our particular relationship to God, all whose commandments are infallibly right, there is naught in the shape of duty, which is not also *due to the Being who made us*; there is nothing that we ought to do, which we do not also *owe* to the Master who claims it in the shape of obedience to himself; there is naught which is simply becoming because of its moral goodness, which is not also legally binding because of a law from heaven that authoritatively requires it.

It is thus and thus alone, as far as we can perceive, that moral approbation and moral obligation have come to be coextensive with each other; and that each is alike applicable to virtue throughout the whole length and breadth of its territory. It is because of God's interposing this authority in behalf of what is right, that, though before a mere propriety, and therefore simply the object of approbation, it now becomes a precept, and is therefore a matter of actual obligation. Yet, apart from the authority of God, and without any reference, at the time, of our thoughts to him at all, we are accustomed to talk, not merely of the rectitude of morality, but also of the obligations of morality, because it belongs to the office of conscience to act the part of a judge, and condemn us when we refuse to do what is conceived to be right, and to reward us for a contrary course.

We are so constituted as to feel that we ought to do a thing which we conceive to be right, simply because we conceive it to be right. There is *an inherent sense of obligation to do what is right*. If it be asked, *why* must I do what is *right*? the answer is, because it *is* right. Why should I do what I ought? Because I ought. This is the *ultimate answer*, and to the unsophisticated and honest mind is a sufficient answer.

248. The opposite of rights, are *wrongs*. A man's rights may be infringed, transgressed by the actions of other men. Thus a man infringes my right to personal safety, by striking me; my right to my property, by stealing it. He who thus violates a man's rights does him a wrong.

249. The terms applied to actions, the opposite of right, are, *violations of duties, transgressions, offenses, crimes, vices, sins*.

250. The law assigns to each person his rights; but

the law also aims at giving to each person what it is right that he should have. That which is legally fixed is also intended to be morally right. Hence the law must depend on morality, and hence the rules and definitions of law may change from time to time, to become more nearly conformed to what is right in itself. In the progress of society men endeavor to determine their rights more rightly; to make laws more just. Thus law must ultimately be regulated by morality.

251. The systems of law especially worthy of our study are the Roman, the English, and our own—which is founded on the latter. [Whewell, vol. i.; Chalmers' Works.]

240. What is the origin and meaning of the term right, as a substantive?

241. What is natural jurisprudence?

242. What is the object of civil law?

243. What ambiguity is there in the use of the word right?

244. Is the existing jurisprudence of society to be complained of, because there are many things morally right which it has not made legally binding, and many things most offensively wrong which it does not punish?

245. While the right and the rightness are separable in regard to the holder of the right, are they so in regard to the other party?

246. What are the counterparts of right and rightness?

247. How are obligation and duty then to be distinguished?

248. What is the opposite of rights?

249. What terms are applied to actions which are the opposite of right?

250. What relation do the laws of a state bear to morality?

251. What systems of law especially deserve our notice and study?

## CHAPTER II.

### PERSONAL RIGHTS.

252. DR. PALEY, in treating upon personal rights, considers them (1.) as *natural* or *adventitious*; (2.) as *alienable* or *unalienable*; (3.) as *perfect* or *imperfect*.

253. *Natural rights* are such as would belong to a man although there subsisted in the world no civil government whatever. Such, for example, as a man's right to his life, limbs, and liberty; his right to the produce of his personal labor; to the use, in common with others, of air, light, and water.

254. *Adventitious rights* are dependent on the laws and institutions of civil government: such as the right of a king over his subjects; of a general over his soldiers; a



right to elect or appoint magistrates, to impose taxes, decide disputes ; a right, in few words, possessed by one man or a particular body of men, to make laws and regulations for the rest.

255. In regard to *alienable and unalienable rights*, the former are those which may be transferred to another person ; the latter may not.

The right to most of those things which we call property, is alienable ; the right of a prince over his people, of a husband over his wife, is unalienable. The natural rights may, however, be forfeited by crime. A man may be deprived of liberty to prevent his injuring others.

256. *Perfect rights* are those which may be asserted by force, or, what in civil society comes into the place of private force, by course of law ; *imperfect rights* may not.

257. A man's right to his life, person, house, are examples of perfect rights : for if these be attacked, he may repel the attack by instant violence, or punish the aggressor by law ; a man's right to his estate, furniture, and all ordinary articles of property : for if they be injuriously taken from him, he may compel the author of the injury to make restitution or satisfaction.

258. Of imperfect rights the following examples are adduced :—

In elections or appointments to offices, the best qualified candidate has a right to success ; yet, if he be rejected, he has no remedy. He can neither seize the office by force, nor obtain redress at law ; his right therefore is imperfect.

A poor neighbor has a right to relief, yet if it be refused him, he must not extort it. A benefactor has a right to returns of gratitude from the person he has obliged ; yet, if he meet with none, he must acquiesce.

Children have a right to affection and education from their parents ; and parents, on their part, to duty and reverence from their children ; yet, if these rights be on either side withholden, there is no legal compulsion by which they can be enforced.

259. There are cases in which a person may have a right to a thing, and yet have no right to use the means necessary to obtain it. By reason of the indeterminate-ness either of the object or of the circumstances of the

right, the permission of force in this case would in its consequence lead to the permission of force in other cases, where there existed no right at all.

A poor man has a right to relief from the rich ; but the mode, season, and amount of that relief, who shall contribute to it, or how much, is not ascertained. Yet these points must be ascertained before a claim to relief can be prosecuted by force. For to allow the poor to ascertain these points for themselves, would be to expose property to so many of these claims, that it would lose its value, or rather, would cease to be property.

The same observation holds of all other cases of imperfect rights ; not to mention that in the instances of gratitude, affection, reverence, and the like, force is excluded by the very idea of the duty, which must be voluntary, or it cannot be performed at all.

260. Where the right is imperfect, the corresponding obligation is imperfect also in the sense already explained. I am under obligation to relieve the poor, to be grateful to my benefactors, take care of my children, and reverence my parents ; but, in all these cases, my obligation, like their right, is imperfect.

261. The epithets *perfect* and *imperfect*, thus applied, are liable to objection. They seem to be ill-chosen on this account, that the use of them leads many to imagine that there is less guilt in the violation of an imperfect obligation than of a perfect one ; whereas, an obligation being perfect or imperfect determines only whether force may or may not be employed to enforce it, and determines nothing else.

Religion and virtue find their principal exercise among the imperfect obligations ; the laws of civil society take pretty good care of the rest. [Paley's Moral Philosophy.]

262. According to Dr. Channing, man's rights belong to him as a moral being, as capable of perceiving moral distinctions, as a subject of moral obligation. As soon as he becomes conscious of duty, a kindred consciousness springs up that he has a right to do what the sense of duty enjoins, and that no foreign will or power can obstruct his moral action without crime. That same inward principle which teaches a man what he is bound to do to others, teaches equally, and at the same instant, what others are bound to do to *him*. That same voice which

forbids him to injure a fellow-creature, forbids every fellow-creature to do *him* harm.

In answer to the question, *What rights belong to human nature?* he observes: They may all be comprised in the right, which belongs to every rational being, to exercise his powers for the promotion of his own and others' happiness and virtue. These are the great purposes of his existence. He is bound to make himself and others better and happier according to his ability; and others are equally bound to allow him to accomplish this grand purpose of existence, unmolested. He has a right, therefore, to use the means given by God for this purpose. He has a right to be respected according to his moral worth; a right to be protected by impartial laws; a right to be exempted from coercion, stripes, and punishment, as long as he respects the rights of others. He has a right to an equivalent for his labor. He has a right to sustain domestic relations, to discharge their duties, and to enjoy the happiness which flows from fidelity in these and other relations.

These and other human rights are not to be given up to society as a prey. On the contrary, the great end of civil society is to secure them. The *great end of government is to repress all wrong*. It is said that in forming civil society, the individual surrenders a part of his rights. It would be more proper to say that he adopts new modes of securing them. He consents, for example, to desist from self-defense, that he and all may be more effectually defended by the public force. He consents to submit his cause to an umpire or tribunal, that justice may be more impartially awarded, and that he and all may enjoy more enduring freedom. He consents to part with a portion of his property in taxation, that his own and others' property may be the more secure. He submits to certain restraints, that he and others may enjoy more enduring freedom. *He expects an equivalent for what he relinquishes, and insists on it as his right.*

The authority of the state to impose laws on its members, is cheerfully allowed; but *the state is equally restrained with individuals by the moral law*. For example, it may not, must not, on any account, put an innocent man to death, or require of him a dishonorable or criminal service. It may demand allegiance, but only on the

ground of the protection it affords. It may pass laws, but only impartial ones, framed for the whole, and not for the few. It must regard every man, over whom it extends its authority, as a vital part of itself, as entitled to its care, and to its provisions for liberty and happiness.

*That government is most perfect*, in which policy is most entirely subjected to justice, or in which the supreme and constant aim is to secure the rights of every human being. This is the beautiful idea of a free government, and no government is free but in proportion as it realizes this. Liberty must not be confounded with popular institutions. A representative government may be as despotic as an absolute monarchy. In as far as it tramples on the rights of many or of one, it is a despotism.

*To states*, as to individuals, *rectitude is the supreme law*. It was never designed that the public good, as disjoined from this, as distinct from justice and reverence for all rights, should be comprehended and made an end. The good of the individual is more important than the outward prosperity of the state.

[These important positions have been eloquently defended by the late Dr. Channing in the second chapter of his work on Slavery.]

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252. How has Dr. Paley divided rights, when applied to persons?

253. How are natural rights defined?

254. How are adventitious rights defined and illustrated?

255. How are alienable and unalienable rights explained?

256. What are the rights which are denominated perfect and imperfect?

257. What examples of perfect rights are given?

258. What examples does Dr. Paley also furnish of imperfect rights?

259. How can a person have a right to a thing, and yet have no right to use the means necessary to obtain it?

260. Where the right is imperfect, is the corresponding obligation imperfect also?

261. Are the epithets perfect and imperfect, thus applied, liable to objection?

262. What view has Dr. Channing taken of human rights?



## CHAPTER III.

## THE RIGHTS OF GOVERNMENT.

263. THE desire of civil society is a powerful spring of human action; and man cannot exist as man except he exist in civil society under the sway of rules of action really enforced by some of the members of the community, who for this purpose are invested with the *rights of government*, and possess *authority* in the community.

264. The rights of government are exemplified,—

(1.) Even in the *family*, and especially in families where the paternal power is most ample.

(2.) When the children of such a family grow up, and when they themselves marry and have children, we may still conceive the habit of obedience to the head of the family to remain. As the family extends, it becomes a family in a wider sense: a house, a tribe, a clan, a nation; but it may still continue to recognize a supreme right to obedience in the common parent. Such is a *patriarchal government*.

(3.) The patriarchal form of society being broken up, the mixture of families, their migrations and various fortunes, still further loosen and destroy the bonds of patriarchal government, and form men into nations, according to various conditions of race, dwelling-place, and history. The *national government* then takes the place of the patriarchal.

265. The supreme authority of a nation may reside in one person, or in many. In most nations there is a difference of ranks connected more or less closely with the exercise of the supreme power. These have certain rights with reference to each other. This constitutes the *political* structure of society. The laws which determine the structure of the government and the duties of its officers, are the *constitution* of the nation.

266. The various *forms of civil government* are—

(1.) *Absolute monarchy*, or *despotism*, in which the supreme authority and legislative power is vested in one individual.

(2.) *An aristocracy*, in which it is exercised by a body

of men, in the election of whom the people are not consulted.

(3.) *A democracy, or republic*, in which the supreme power is exercised, either collectively in person, or, as in the United States, through their agents or representatives, chosen by them at stated periods for this purpose.

(4.) *A mixed monarchy*, partaking of all the above forms, yet differing essentially from each. This form is adopted in England and France.

267. The various *branches of a well-regulated civil government* are, the *legislative* or law-making, whose office it is to remove out of the laws all that is unjust, so as to make them more and more just; the *judicial*, which decides disputed questions that arise among its citizens concerning their rights and obligations; and the *executive*, which executes existing laws, and judicial decisions.

268. *Offenses against the rights of government* are, *rebellion*, when subjects openly and by force resist their rulers; *treason*, when by combination and contrivance they seek to dispossess them; *sedition*, when they strive to transfer some of the functions of government to other hands than the regularly constituted authorities.

In many free states, where the citizens have a considerable share in the government, they are divided into *parties*, which act upon opposite or different maxims in the administration of the state.

When a party acts not for the good of the state, but for its own advantage as a party, it is a *faction*.

269. *Law is distinguished* into the *law of nature* (*jus naturæ*), embracing that which is common in the views and determinations of all civilized countries in regard to rights and obligations; and into *civil or municipal law* (*jus civile, or jus municipale*), that which is peculiar in the law of a particular state or city.

There is also *international jus, or law of nations*, which defines and enforces the rights which nations may claim against each other.

270. The *obligation of law* has been distinguished into *moral* and *natural*. We are under a moral obligation, that is, we are bound, in conscience, to obey every good law. We are under a natural obligation, that is, we are determined by prudence, to obey even those bad laws which we cannot transgress without incurring a penalty.

Bad laws, however, we *ought* not to obey, if our conscience declare it criminal to obey them; and such laws seldom exist in regular society.

All the divine laws are good, and guarded by the most awful sanctions; so that to obey them we are under the strongest obligations, natural and moral.

[Whewell's Elements of Morality.]

271. The following declaration of rights, personal and governmental, is made in our celebrated Declaration of Independence:—

“We hold these truths to be self-evident:—that all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness; that to secure these rights, governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed; that whenever any form of government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the right of the people to alter or to abolish it, and to institute a new government, laying its foundation on such principles, and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their safety and happiness.

“Prudence, indeed, will dictate, that governments long established should not be changed for light and transient causes; and, accordingly, all experience hath shown that mankind are more disposed to suffer while evils are sufferable, than to right themselves by abolishing the forms to which they have been accustomed.

“But when a long train of abuses and usurpations, pursuing invariably the same object, evinces a design to reduce them under absolute despotism, it is their right, it is their *duty*, to throw off such government, and to provide new guards for their future security.”

263. Upon what necessity are the rights of government founded, and what is their nature?

264. Where are these rights exemplified?

265. In whom may the supreme authority of a nation reside?

266. What are the various forms of civil government?

267. What are the various branches of a well-regulated government?

268. What offenses against the rights of government may be committed?

269. How is law distinguished?

270. How has the obligation of law been distinguished?

271. What declaration of rights personal and governmental is made in our celebrated “Declaration of Independence?”

## BOOK V.

RELATIVE IMPORTANCE OF NATURAL AND REVEALED  
MORALITY.

## CHAPTER I.

## INSUFFICIENCY OF THE LIGHT OF NATURE.

272. IN whatever manner it is accounted for, the fact cannot be disputed, that no persons, ancient or modern, who had only the light of nature to guide them in their researches, have attained to the true knowledge of the unity of God ; or have formed such notions of his worship, as were suitable to his majesty, holiness, and spirituality ; or have composed a system of morality, founded on just principles, and enforced by sanctions of such efficacy, as to insure obedience to its precepts ; or have established by convincing arguments the doctrine of the future existence of the soul.

Perplexed with doubts, and sensible of the weakness of their reason, the heathens themselves, not the vulgar only but philosophers, have acknowledged the necessity of a divine revelation.

273. Yet modern infidels, in proof of the sufficiency of reason, among other things, allege that they can produce a system of natural religion complete in all its parts, and supported by incontestable evidence. But to what cause shall we attribute their superiority to the wisest men of antiquity ; to Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle ? Does nature now speak with a louder voice, and are her lessons written in more legible characters ? No ; but the circumstances of our modern infidels, and of the philosophers of antiquity, are exceedingly different. The latter felt their way amid the dubious twilight of nature, while the former walk in the sunshine of revelation. When an infidel boasts of the clearness and extent of his ideas on the subject of natural religion, he is a dwarf mounted on the



shoulders of a giant and vaunting that he sees further than a man of ordinary stature. He is a thief, impudently attempting to rival or eclipse the splendor of another man, by a display of those riches which he has previously stolen from him. It is to the Scriptures, either directly or indirectly, that he is indebted for the greater perfection of his system.

274. If human nature is depraved, as both history and experience prove, the same knowledge will not suffice us, which would have been sufficient in a state of innocence. Although reason were able to discover all the articles of natural religion, it would not have been a competent guide, because the new circumstances of man, in consequence of his sins, required the knowledge of new truths, which lay beyond the range of its inquiries. Reason could give us no adequate information respecting the means of recovering our innocence, and regaining the favor of our Maker.

We need to know whether God will pardon our offenses, and on what terms he will pardon them; and it is manifest that on these points none can give us information but himself. On the supposition of a remedial scheme, or a divine interposition in our favor, there must be new duties incumbent on us, of which the light of nature could give us no notice, because they are the result of a new dispensation.

[Dick on Inspiration.]

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272. Is the light of nature found sufficient to teach us our duty, and to conduct us to happiness?

273. What do infidels allege in proof of the sufficiency of reason; and how is their allegation to be met?

274. What proof of the insufficiency of reason in matters of duty and religion, may be drawn from the universal depravity of man?

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## CHAPTER II.

### SUPERIOR EXCELLENCE OF THE MORALITY TAUGHT IN THE SACRED SCRIPTURES.

275. WHILE infidels object to some of the details, and most obviously have no real desire to promote the interests of morality, they nevertheless allow, that "the Gospel is one continued lesson of the strictest morality; of justice,

of benevolence, and of universal charity," and declare that they would preserve Christianity, for the sake of its moral influence on the common people.

276. The morals of the Scriptures embrace all that was really good in the ethics of heathen sages, and in the dictates of natural religion; and reenact them with greater clearness and authority. The scattered fragments of moral truth, which original revelation, or the moral nature of man, or the labor and study of philosophers have dispersed up and down in the world, are found to be comprehended in the Bible.

277. There is a completeness in the Bible code of precepts, found nowhere else. They insist on every virtue and duty for which man was originally formed; and forbid every vice and sin contrary to his real relations and obligations. There is nothing omitted of the duties which he owes to himself, to his neighbor, and to Almighty God; nor, as in heathen and Mohammedan systems, is there anything impure or debasing intermixed with its code.

278. The STANDARD OF DUTY contained in the sacred scriptures, is embodied in these words:—" *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind.* This is the first and great commandment; and the second is like unto it, *Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.*" When Jesus Christ uttered these memorable words, he raised the true and intelligible standard of morals, which places even a child in a Christian country far above, in this respect, the greatest moral philosophers of the ancient or modern world.

279. It follows from this, that *the Christian code omits many false virtues of heathenism, and insists on many real ones unknown to it.*

*Christianity rejects* from its catalogue of virtues, vanity, pride, the love of fame, jealousy of honor, resentment, revenge, hatred of enemies, contempt of the low and miserable, self-confidence, apathy under suffering, and patriotism in the sense of pushing conquest and upholding the interests of one nation to the hatred and injury of others.

*Christianity inserts* humility, meekness, the forgiveness of personal injuries, self-denial, abstraction of heart from earthly things, sympathy with the poor and mean, renun-

ciation of confidence in self, cheerful resignation under affliction.

280. *The Christian code requires an abstinence from the proximate causes of evil, and demands what is right in motive and intention, as well as in the overt act.*

Human laws chiefly deal with the manifest action, when capable of proof. They argue back very feebly to the intention, which they still do aim at reaching as they can. The divine law lays the restraint upon the intention, the first element of the moral action of man; it considers nothing to be virtuous, unless the motive, as well as the material action, be right.

281. *Christian morality regards all outward forms of devotion and piety as means to a higher end, and as only acceptable to God when connected with that higher end. In this it stands opposed to all false religions, which invariably connive at the substitution of ceremonies and ablutions, for moral duty.*

282. *The Christian morals go to form a particular sort of character, of such excellence as no other system of ethics ever aimed at.*

They go to form a character perfectly attainable, and yet altogether new and lovely; they tend to form a temper and conduct so excellent and praiseworthy, and yet so unknown to heathen moralists, as to stamp upon Christianity the seal of its heavenly origin.

283. *The sacred writers placed duty upon its proper basis, the principle of piety, a sacred regard to the will of God; whereas other moralists found it upon the deductions of reason, the fitness of things, and views of private and public good. Separated from piety, morality is merely a matter of decorum or of interest: but in connection with it, morality is the homage of creatures to their Creator.*

284. *The peculiar excellence of the moral precepts of Scripture, furnishes a convincing argument to prove their divine origin.*

The argument is thus clearly presented by Professor Dick:—

The Christian law is perfect: it embraces all the duties of man, and lays the foundation of the highest attainments in virtue; and were it universally obeyed, the innocence of the golden age would be revived, and the earth would

be an unvaried scene of peace and good-will. Now, *let it be observed by whom this law was given to the world.* It was never alleged that they were distinguished by eminence in intellectual vigor, by literary accomplishments, by metaphysical acumen, or by large experience of human life. The greater part of them, confessedly, could lay no claim to these qualifications. Yet they have delivered a code which far surpasses the most celebrated laws and precepts of the legislators and wise men of the heathen world.

To what cause can we ascribe their superiority? If their wisdom was more than human, it must have been derived from a superhuman source. Since infidels will not admit this inference, let them substitute a better one.

Suppose it possible for the sacred writers to have invented this code of morality, would they have done so? Would impostors have labored to subject the world to a law so holy; a law which, in the first place, condemned themselves for presuming to use the name of God, with a design to deceive their fellow men? Would they who set out with a gross violation of truth and of charity, have been anxious to guard others against evil thoughts and contrivances? Would men who entertained no reverence for the Supreme Being, have placed him at the head of the system, and discovered a jealous care of his honor, a desire to make him the object of universal respect and love?

*The precepts of the Bible are an irresistible proof that the Bible did not emanate from bad men: and good men would not have passed it on the world as divine, if it had originated from themselves.* They might have presented it to the public as their view of a subject about which so many have delivered their sentiments; but they would have given it in such a form, and accompanied it with such declarations, as would have satisfied all that it was a work of their own.

275. What concessions have the most distinguished infidels published in reference to the morals taught in the sacred scriptures?

276. How will the morals of the Scriptures bear a comparison with the ethics of heathen sages?

277. Are we justified in asserting the completeness of the Bible code of precepts?

278. What sort of a standard of duty do the Scriptures hold up to men?

279. What inference is to be drawn from this alleged fact?



280. Does the Christian code of morals extend its requirements and prohibitions beyond the external act?

281. How does Christian morality regard all outward forms of devotion?

282. What sort of character do the Christian morals go to form?

283. How does the superior excellence of the Christian morals appear from the basis on which they are made to rest?

284. May we not found an argument for the truth of revealed religion upon its moral precepts, the peculiar excellence of which has now been demonstrated?

### CHAPTER III.

#### THE MANNER IN WHICH OUR DUTY IS TAUGHT IN THE HOLY SCRIPTURES.

285. SOMETIMES the Scriptures enter into a detail of duties; but had they attempted to point out all the minutiae of duty, they would have swelled to such a size as would have defeated their design, because few could have found leisure to peruse them, and still fewer would have been accurately acquainted with their multifarious contents.

286. The sacred writers deliver their instructions *in the form of maxims, and of clear, decisive prohibitions or requirements*, rather than in systematic treatises reasoned out in detail. And there is great advantage in such a course of instruction in our duty. It is *brief and intelligible*. The Ten Commandments, who cannot remember? The vindication of them, in the Sermon on the Mount, from the false glosses of the Jews, who cannot understand? The exposition of a right temper in the twelfth chapter of Romans, where is the heart that does not feel? The picture of charity, or love, in the thirteenth of the first of Corinthians, is familiar to a child. The maxims of the Book of Proverbs are in every mouth. Revelation, thus, does not reason as a philosopher, but commands as a lawgiver.

287. Revelation utters with sententious authority her brief determinations, as occasions require, in popular language, for the understanding of all; and leaves man to collect, as he can, her maxims into systems, or compare and illustrate them by the aid of sound reason and conscience.

Human treatises on morals stop to define and prove every duty, to contrast it with its proximate defect and excess, and to reduce the whole to an elaborate system. Revelation takes for granted that man knows what temperance, chastity, fortitude, benevolence, mean, or may learn them from other sources, and contents herself with binding them upon the conscience. The consequence is, that a child at school, in a Christian country, knows more of the standard of morals, and the details of social virtue, than the most learned of the ancient sages.

288. The sacred writers *set forth human duty by strong and affecting examples*. This is peculiar to the writers of the Bible. All its precepts are illustrated and embodied in the historical parts. All the separate virtues, duties, graces, acts of abstinence and self-denial, effects of the Christian spirit, and of its principles carried out into habit and character, are set forth in the lives of Christ and of his apostles.

*All the infirmities, and errors, and vices to be shunned*, are exposed in the fearful punishments of guilty nations, in the destruction of the cities of the plain, in the deluge, in the captivity of Babylon, in the lives of wicked princes.

With this view also, the sins and falls of the true servants of God are held forth for our caution, with a fidelity unknown except in the inspired scriptures—the drunkenness of Noah, the incest of Lot, the falsehoods uttered by Abraham and Jacob, the irritated expressions of Moses, the sin, the gross and awful sin of David, the rashness of Josiah.

The attempts made by infidel writers to misrepresent the purport of some of these narratives are too absurd to be noticed. The tendency of the scriptural exposure of vice is to excite abhorrence; to which the plainness and brevity of its descriptions, and even the directness of the terms which it employs, greatly conduce. A few expressions have acquired an import, from the mere lapse of time since our English translation was made, not originally designed, and are instantly corrected by every intelligent reader.

289. The sacred writers furnish *examples* which hold forth the duties of parents and children, of masters and servants, of husbands and wives, of ministers, of missionaries, and of teachers of youth. They supply us also

with examples which display the faults and excellences of nations, of bodies politic, of legislators, of magistrates, and of churches.

290. The peculiar truths of the gospel, as well as those other parts of revelation with which the precepts are inseparably connected, are employed as fit and powerful *motives to secure obedience* to the maxims and precepts of duty.

291. The great *facts on which the revealed doctrines rest*, and which prepare for the operation of motives, are, the fall and corruption of man; the mercy of God in the gift of his Son; the birth, sufferings, and death of Jesus Christ; the descent and operations of the Holy Ghost; the promulgation of the Christian religion; and its offers to mankind.

The facts of Christianity, brought home to man's heart, that is, being truly believed, render morals practicable, natural, delightful.

292. The doctrines, which are explanatory of the facts of revelation, are expressly designed and admirably adapted to produce, in those who believe them, a conformity to its moral precepts and maxims.

It might be shown also that *the peculiar doctrines of revelation go to form exactly that sort of character, and no other, which the morals require*; and that the precepts delineate and require that sort of character, and no other, which the doctrines go to form.

293. The promises and privileges of Christianity are attached to *certain dispositions and states of mind*, which are essential parts of the morals of revelation; and hence they become powerful motives to obedience.

294. The precepts are involved in all the other parts of revelation. There is scarcely a chapter in any of the merely historical books that is not fraught with moral instruction in the form of exhortations, examples, and warnings. In regard to the prophets, the scope of all their remonstrances, persuasions, and invitations is to induce the disobedient and immoral to a life of virtue and piety. The same, in a higher degree, may be said of the evangelical histories, and the epistles of the holy apostles.

In short, as the precepts without the doctrines of revelation prescribe an unattainable rule, so the doctrines without the precepts fail in their great purpose—evapo-

rate in mere emotions and sensibilities, and can neither sanctify nor save.

295. The details of human duty may be learned from the Scriptures by adopting the rules laid down in Book VI. Section VII.

296. In regard to the question whether it is lawful to draw *inferences from Scripture*, nothing is more plain, than that when a proposition is laid down from which certain inferences naturally arise, it is the office of the understanding to draw the conclusions, and to rest in them with equal confidence as in the premises from which they are deduced. This is the mode of procedure of all intelligent creatures, in the matters to which they turn their attention. Human knowledge would be exceedingly circumscribed and imperfect, if our views were strictly confined to facts; and these would be of little use, if we were not permitted to educe from them observations and maxims for the regulation of our conduct.

Had everything which it is necessary for us to know been delivered in express terms in the Scriptures, the Bible would have been too voluminous for general use; and beside, such minuteness was not necessary. God does not speak in it to children merely, but to men who are capable of reasoning on the common affairs of life, and can use this power in matters of religion.

297. The denial of the lawfulness of drawing inferences from Scripture, goes much further than the opponents of drawing inferences are aware, and would place them and us in the most awkward and ridiculous situation; for it would follow that we must never write or speak about religion but in the words of inspiration, and that all theological books and all sermons should be discarded: for of what do they consist but of inferences from Scripture, when they do not merely retail its words, but attempt to explain their meaning?

[Wilson's Evidences; Prof. Dick's Lectures.]

285. Do the Scriptures enter into a full detail of human duty?

286. What is the usual form in which human duty is taught by the sacred writers?

287. In teaching morality, how does revelation differ from human treatises?

288. What other mode, beside that of brief maxims, requirements, or prohibitions, do the sacred writers employ, to make us acquainted with our various duties?



289. What other scriptural examples, illustrative and enforceive of human duty, might be adduced?

290. What constraining and persuasive motives of duty do the sacred writers employ to render their moral teachings availing?

291. What are the facts on which the revealed doctrines rest, and which prepare for the operation of motives most powerful, universal, and permanent?

292. How is the morality of revelation supported and brought into exercise by means of its doctrines?

293. What aid to good morals is furnished in the promises and privileges of Christianity?

294. How are the precepts involved in all the other parts of revelation?

295. Since the Scriptures do not furnish us with all the details of duty, how is that deficiency to be supplied?

296. A question has been raised whether it is lawful to draw inferences from Scripture, and what authority should be assigned to them?

297. What consequence is involved in the denial of the lawfulness of drawing inferences from Scripture?

## CHAPTER IV.

### SANCTIONS BY WHICH THE MORALS OF REVELATION ARE ULTIMATELY ENFORCED.

298. **WHATEVER** be the extent and purity of the rule of duty, whatever the means by which it works, whatever its inseparable connection with the doctrines of revelation, all is inefficient, unless the authority which it brings to bear upon the conscience, and the rewards and punishments attached to it, are weighty, solemn, efficacious.

A hand dissevered from the body, might as well be represented as sufficient for the purposes of labor, as unconnected and unauthoritative principles, for the purposes of morality.

299. Heathen morals, in addition to innumerable other deficiencies, labored under one which was fatal to the whole system; they had no adequate sanction, no authority, no knowledge clear and definite of a future state, or an eternal judgment.

*Infidelity builds on no firmer foundation*, when she pretends to raise her morals on the love of glory, honor, interest, utility, and the progress of civilization, with some feeble admissions of the belief of a future life.

300. Christianity stands forth in the midst of mankind, the only religion which asserts the will of God to be the

clear and unbending rule of duty, and refers men to an eternal retribution as its ultimate sanction. Her morality conduces, indeed, to the welfare of man, it is agreeable to the reason of things, it responds to the voice of conscience; but none of these is its foundation.

The WILL OF GOD, founded on the infinite rectitude of his nature, is the brief, undeviating authority of moral obedience. And what majesty does this throw around the precepts of the Bible! "Thus saith the LORD," is the introduction, the reason, the obligation of every command.

301. Concerning a future state of rewards and punishments, nature is ignorant: nature knows nothing distinctly of the rules of the last judgment.

Revelation alone pronounces, with its awful voice, the immortality of the soul. Revelation unveils the eternal world. [Wilson's Evidences.]

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298. Of what importance are the sanctions of morality?

299. What was a fatal deficiency in heathen morals?

300. Wherein consists the superiority of Christian morals as to adequate sanctions?

301. What contrast exists between the teachings of paganism or of infidelity, and those of revelation, concerning a future state of rewards and punishments?

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## CHAPTER V.

### IDENTITY OF MORALITY AND RELIGION.

302. UPON the question, whether a man may be properly denominated a moral man, though destitute of religion, the doctrine of the Scriptures is comprehended in one proposition, "This is the love of God, that we keep his commandments."

The "keeping of God's commandments," is a comprehensive definition of morality: the "love of God," is the sum of religious principle and of religious character; and the proposition quoted from the New Testament affirms, "*This* is the love of God, that we keep his commandments."

The meaning of this proposition obviously is, that there is no love of God without the keeping of his com-

mandments; and that there is no keeping of his commandments without love to God: a statement which amounts to the same thing as this other,—that *there is no religion without morality, and that there is no morality without religion*. He who loves God keeps the commandments in principle: he who keeps the commandments, loves God in action. Love is obedience in the heart: obedience is love in the life. Morality, then, is religion in practice: religion is morality in principle.

303. In the language of general society, the *good man* is the man who has sufficient means, and sufficient honor, to pay his debts. The term *virtue* is applied merely to relative and social virtues, and especially those which support one's credit in the business world. The virtues of truth, and integrity, and honor, especially when united with generosity and practical kindness, will secure the designation, although there should be no very rigid adherence to those of temperance and chastity; but if these, in any unusual degree, are united with the former, the man becomes a paragon of goodness, the very best of men, and sure of heaven if any on earth are. Meanwhile, piety, which is entitled to the precedence of all these virtues, and without which they are destitute of the very first principle of pure morality, is altogether omitted in the account.

Even in the writings of ethical philosophers religion and morality are severed in the same way. They embrace discussions on morals, such as would require no very material alteration to accommodate them to atheism.

304. It is one of the distinguishing peculiarities of all Bible morality, that it *begins with God*, that it makes *godliness* its first and fundamental principle; and this peculiarity forms one, and not the least considerable, of the internal evidences for the divine original of the Bible.

No right moral principle is there admitted to exist, independent of a primary and supreme regard to Deity. There is no such anomaly to be found there, as that which meets us so frequently in the language of the world's morality,—a good heart, or a good man, without the principles and sentiments of godliness.

305. The Scriptures, in thus identifying morality and religion, may easily be vindicated on principles of reason: for does not the Bible, in the ground it takes, give God

his proper place? Would not the adoption of a lower position, in any book pretending to be from God, have been of itself, sufficient to discredit and repudiate its pretensions?

We are often told that relative morality consists in giving every one his due. The definition is a good one; but the application of it should commence at the highest point in the scale of obligation. Is there nothing due from creatures, but to their fellow-creatures? Has the everlasting God nothing due to him? Is not love his due? Is not worship his due? Is not obedience his due? The Deity must not be degraded to a secondary station: he is entitled to the first.

306. The obligation to God, compared with other obligations, is the first that binds the creature, and in this obligation all other obligations originate; they depend upon it; they are comprehended in it. What are the duties which we owe to our fellow-creatures, but integrant parts of his law? It is *as His precepts* that they must be fulfilled; so that, if they are duly done, they must be done from regard to his authority, which amounts to the same thing with their being done from a religious principle.

*The precepts of the first and second tables of the revealed law come equally under the designation of moral duties.* The obligation to the one and to the other is the very same. The man who obeys his parents, who keeps his word, who pays his debts, who dispenses his charities, who performs any other acts, under the influence of principles that rise no higher than to a recognition of the claims of his fellow-creatures, has the first principles of moral obligation yet to learn.

307. In the department of morals, as well as in that of natural science, mischief often arises from the substitution of the word Nature, instead of the word God. Though the term Nature is used only by a figure of speech, yet it is employed by writers on natural philosophy in such a way, and so often, that there is danger of its assuming in the mind an imaginary personality, like the mysterious "plastic power" of some of the ancients; putting forth voluntary energies in the production, arrangement, and superintendence of the universe.

Thus also it happens in the science of ethics. Moral



theorists speak of the dictates of nature, till they too are in danger of forgetting "nature's God." According to their language, nature teaches parents to love their children; nature inculcates truth and humanity; nature reprobates malevolence and falsehood. The laws of nature are spoken of, till it slips out of mind that they are the laws of God; and the real impulse, or the supposed dictate, of nature, assumes the place of the divine will.

[Wardlaw's Christian Ethics.]

Is virtue, then, and piety the same?  
 No; piety is more; 'tis virtue's source;  
 Mother of ev'ry worth, as that of joy.  
 Men of the world this doctrine ill digest:  
 They smile at piety; yet boast aloud  
 Good-will to men; nor know, they strive to part  
 What nature joins; and thus confute themselves.  
 With piety begins all good on earth;  
 'Tis the first-born of rationality.  
 On piety, humanity is built;  
 And, on humanity, much happiness;  
 And yet still more on piety itself.  
 A soul in commerce with her God, is heav'n;  
 Feels not the tumults and the shocks of life,  
 The whirls of passion, and the strokes of heart  
 A Deity believed, is joy begun;  
 A Deity adored, is joy advanced;  
 A Deity *beloved*, is joy matured.

YOUNG.

302. Do the sacred scriptures warrant the too prevalent opinion that morality and religion are distinct attributes of character; that a man may be properly denominated a moral man though destitute of religion?

303. How does the sentiment of Scripture differ from the sentiment expressed in society and in the writings of philosophers?

304. What, in contrast with prevailing sentiment, is one of the distinguishing peculiarities of all Bible morality?

305. Can the Scriptures be vindicated on principles of reason for thus identifying morality and religion; for asserting that the one cannot exist without the other?

206. How is our obligation to God related to other obligations, and what is their relative importance?

307. In the department of morals, as well as in that of natural philosophy, what danger arises from the substitution of the word nature instead of God?

## BOOK VI.

## OF THE VARIOUS BRANCHES OF HUMAN DUTY.

THIS Book is divided into two Parts: the first embraces a consideration of the *duties which respect ourselves*, and which may be learned in a great measure from an investigation of our active and moral powers. In the Book which treats of these, some remarks are made upon the duty and mode of a proper exercise and control of these powers, which remarks, but for the sake of convenience, might have been reserved to this place, and may be profitably referred to, in connection with the duties that stand somewhat related, and which are now to be described.

The second Part of Book VI. defines the *duty of man chiefly with respect to other beings*, as it may be learned from the two fundamental Laws of Love—that of love to God, and that of love to our neighbor; from the law delivered by our Savior—"All things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them;" from St. Paul's beautiful description of love to our neighbor; from the Ten Commandments; and from the biography of Christ, and of his followers

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PART I.

## OF THE DUTIES WHICH RESPECT OURSELVES.

## INTRODUCTORY REMARKS.

MAN, doubtless, is laid under the most sacred obligations to feel concerned for his own moral improvement and happiness, and to use all proper means to secure and promote them. These are duties which he owes to himself, and the violation of which is peculiarly criminal

in him, since he thus so far frustrates the glorious design of his being, by rendering himself unfit for discharging his obligations either to God or to man.

The obligations which more immediately terminate on himself, and which may therefore be styled the duties he owes himself, may be classed under the heads of intellectual cultivation and control; moral progress and reformation; temperance or self-government, and contentment; fortitude; the formation of good habits; prudence, or a suitable regard to his own happiness. The duty of contentment, and the evils opposed to it, are exhibited under the head of the Tenth Commandment: the other duties will now be considered in the order just stated.

## CHAPTER I.

### DUTY OF INTELLECTUAL CULTIVATION AND CONTROL.

308. THE intellectual powers, in proportion as they are improved, are ornamental to our nature, and qualify us for being serviceable to ourselves, our friends, the community, and mankind. We should therefore be continually solicitous to acquire knowledge, strengthen our memory, rectify our judgment, and refine our taste: by reading good books, and those only; by accurately observing what passes in the world around us; by studying the works of nature, and elegant performances of art; by meditating on the real nature of things, and the causes and consequences of human conduct, as they occur in history and common life; by avoiding frivolous pursuits, trifling discourse, and unprofitable theory; and by losing no opportunity of profiting by the conversation and example of wise and good men.

To neglect the acquisition of wisdom, when the means of it are in our power, is always followed by a bitter, and generally unavailing, repentance.

309. The regulation of our trains of thought will be seen to be our duty, when we reflect that the thoughts are the prime movers of the whole human conduct. All that makes a figure on the great theater of the world, the employments of the busy, the enterprises of the ambitious, and the exploits of the warlike, the virtues which

form the happiness, and the crimes which occasion the misery of mankind, originate in that silent and secret recess of thought which is hidden from every human eye.

310. Too many suppose that thought may lawfully be unrestrained. Passions, they may perhaps admit, require government and restraint, because they are violent emotions and disturb society. But with their thoughts, they plead, no one is concerned. By these, so long as they are not disclosed, no offense can be given, and no injury committed. To enjoy, unrestrained, the full range of imagination, appears to them the native right and privilege of man.

311. Had we to do with none but our fellow-creatures, such a sentiment might be specious; but in the sight of the Supreme Being, thoughts often bear the character of good or evil, as much as actions, and they are especially the subjects of divine jurisdiction, because they are cognizable at no other tribunal.

Again, the regulation of our thoughts is of prime consequence from their direct influence on conduct. Actions are, in truth, thoughts ripened into consistency and substance.

312. Our thoughts are not always the offspring of choice; often they are inevitably impressed upon the mind by surrounding objects. Often they start up, as of themselves, without any principle of introduction which we are able to trace. But after an allowance is made for thought arising under such circumstances, a multitude of cases occur, in which we are no less accountable for what we think than for what we do.

As, *first*, when the introduction of any train of thought depends upon ourselves, and is our voluntary act; by turning our attention toward such objects, awakening such passions, or engaging in such employments, as we know must give a peculiar determination to our thoughts.

*Next*, when thoughts, by whatever accident they may have been originally suggested, are indulged with deliberation and complacency. Though the mind has been passive in their reception, and therefore free from blame, yet, if it be active in their continuance, the guilt becomes its own. They may have intruded at first, like unbidden



guests; but if, when entered, they are made welcome, and kindly entertained, the case is the same as if they had been invited from the beginning.

*Thirdly*, we are accountable for those thoughts also, which find admittance into our minds from negligence, from total relaxation of attention, from allowing our imagination to rove with entire license. The consequences of this practice must all be charged to our account.

313. We are to aim, in governing our thoughts, to take the most effectual measures to prevent the introduction of such as are useless or sinful, and for hastening their expulsion if they shall have introduced themselves without consent of the will. In no article of religion or morals are men more culpably remiss, than in the unrestrained indulgence they give to fancy; and that, too, for the most part, without remorse. Of the innumerable hours that have been employed in thought, how few are marked with any permanent or useful effect! How many have either passed away in idle dreams and frivolous fancies, or have been abandoned to anxious, discontented musings, or to thoughts which have excited irregular and criminal desires! How much time has been criminally wasted in forming chimerical plans of what we could wish to attain or choose to be, if we could frame the course of things according to our desire!

*Rules for the Government of our Thoughts.*

314. (1.) Study to acquire the habit of attention to thought. It is the power of attention which, in a great measure, distinguishes the wise and the great from the vulgar and trifling herd of men. Acquire the power of fixing your thoughts upon useful and proper objects. Let your thoughts also be made the subject of thought and review. Accustom yourself to make such inquiries as these: "Shall I be the wiser or better for dwelling on such thoughts as now fill my mind? Are they entirely consistent with my innocence, and with my present and future peace?"

(2.) To govern well our thoughts, it is necessary to guard against idleness, which is the parent of frivolous thoughts, of loose imaginations, and inordinate desires.

The ever active and restless power of thought, if not employed about what is good, naturally and unavoidably engenders evil.

As, therefore, you would govern your thoughts, or, indeed, as you would have any thoughts that are worthy of being governed, provide honorable employment for the activity of your mind. Keep knowledge, virtue, and usefulness ever in view. Let your life proceed in a train of such pursuits as are worthy of a rational, moral, and social being.

(3.) When criminal thoughts arise, call in other ideas to your aid; or resort to some other pursuit than that which now engages your attention, and thus direct your mind from thoughts of an improper character.

(4.) Impress the mind with an habitual sense of the omnipresence and omniscience of God. We are never less alone than when by ourselves; for then He is still with us whose inspection is of greater consequence than that of all mankind. [Beattie; Dr. Blair.]

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308. What may be said in favor of the cultivation of our intellectual powers as a duty; and what of the manner in which it may be pursued?

309. How does the regulation of our trains of thought appear to be a duty?

310. What error must here be noticed?

311. How may the erroneousness of this sentiment be shown?

312. How far is thought under our control, and for how much of it are we accountable?

313. What then is the great object at which we are to aim in the government of our thoughts?

314. What rules may be useful for the government of our thoughts?

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## CHAPTER II.

### DUTY OF MORAL PROGRESS, AND REFORMATION.

315. MORAL and intellectual progress is the greatest good which we can desire for ourselves; and, of course, for others also. Hence wisdom and benevolence demand of us that we aim constantly at the *moral and intellectual progress of ourselves, and of the rest of mankind*. So long as we live, we shall have room to make ourselves wiser and better.

316. All acts of duty, and all affections which lead to acts of duty, tend to promote our moral culture.

On the other hand, all *transgressions of duty* arrest our moral progress, and are steps in a retrograde course.

317. It is the moral business of every person to *resist* temptation.

The reason and the moral faculty must be employed in controlling the desires and affections when they impel us in an immoral direction. All the results of our moral culture must be called to our aid for this purpose.

318. The universal voice of mankind declares some offenses to be greater, some to be less; yet no transgression can be said to be so much better than another as not to be utterly bad, nor to be slight, since the slightest interrupts our moral progress.

Those offenses are to be deemed most grievous, which are most pernicious in their effect upon our moral culture.

319. The mode in which the poison of immoral purposes, desires, and affections was taken into our being, was, by their being *our* purposes, *our* desires, *our* affections. In order to expel their effect, they must be repudiated, so that they shall no longer belong to us. They must be changed into their reverse: desire, into aversion; love, into hate; the purpose to do, into the purpose to undo; joy in what was done, to sorrow that it was done.

This change must be carried, by an effort of thought, into the past. We must recall in our memory the past act of transgression, condemning, as we do so, the motives by which we were misled, and the purpose which we formed. This change, this sorrow, this renunciation and condemnation of our past act, is *repentance*.

320. Repentance is not a sufficient remedy for the mischief of transgression; but there can be no remedy of the evil without this. The transgressor must, at least, *repent*, in order to cast out of his being the poison of immoral act or purpose.

321. Beside the exercise of the repentance now described, we must *reform* our lives. *Amendment*, as well as repentance, is the necessary sequel of transgression, in virtue of that duty of moral progress which is constantly incumbent upon all men.

322. In addition to what reason teaches upon this subject, we need the teachings of religion.

The moralist very properly teaches, that, after transgression, repentance and amendment are necessary steps in our moral culture. But the moralist cannot pronounce how far these steps can avail as a remedy for the evil; how far they can avert the consequences of sin from man's condition and destination.

These are points on which the moralist necessarily looks to religion for her teaching.

323. Amendment is required by morality to be *immediate*.

If a man *repents* in the middle of an immoral act, he will not go on with the act. As soon as the authority of morality is acknowledged, the moral course of action must begin; and not at some later period, when pending acts have been completed. Duty is the perpetual rightful governor of every man; and the man who merely promises to obey this governor at some future time, is really disobedient. The man who completes an immoral act, knowing it to be immoral, commits a new offense. He yielded to temptation in the first part of the act; he sins against conviction in the second.

This remark may be of use when we come to consider some cases of duty. For instance, if I have made an immoral promise, and see my fault, it is my duty not to complete the act by performing the promise.

324. Every means of improving our moral nature, it behooves us to employ. That is the business for which we are continued in the world, and on which our happiness, forever, will depend.

325. As means of such improvement, we ought constantly to be attentive to our conduct; not to our actions only, but also to our thoughts, passions, and purposes; to reflect upon them daily, with a fixed resolution to reform what has been amiss; and carefully to avoid temptation and bad company.

326. Of *bad company*, the fascinations, if we give way to them ever so little, are so powerful, and assault our frail nature from so many quarters at once, that it is hardly possible to escape their influence; our minds must be contaminated by them, even though there should be no apparent impurity in our outward behavior. For, from our



prone to imitation, we come to act, and even to think like those with whom we live, especially if we have any affection for them: and bad men have often agreeable qualities, which may make us contract such a liking to them, as shall incline us to be partial even to the exceptionable parts of their character.

Moreover, the fear of giving offense, or of being ridiculed for singularity; the sophistries by which wicked men endeavor to vindicate their conduct; and the habit of seeing or hearing vice encouraged, or virtue disregarded; all conspire, by lessening our abhorrence of the one, and our reverence for the other, to seduce into criminal practice and licentious principle.

327. It should ever be borne in mind that we have commenced a career of existence that shall never end. Every step we take in life is to have an influence on those that follow. We should therefore be careful, never by our present conduct to injure our future interests. During the whole of life we should be employed in the diligent prosecution of that system of education which is requisite to qualify us for the duties and enjoyments of a higher state of existence. The wisest and the best have cause for persevering exertion, and room for growing improvement.

[Whewell; Fergus; Beattie.]

315. What is the highest good to which we can direct our aim?

316. How is the moral life nourished or impaired?

317. What moral business has each individual to perform?

318. According to what measure and standard do moral transgressions become greater and graver?

319. When transgression has been committed, how is rectitude to be restored? When the poison of an immoral act has been taken into our being, how is it to be ejected, and the powers of life restored to their healthful action?

320. Is the repentance thus described, a sufficient remedy for the mischief of transgression?

321. What, beside the repentance thus described, is necessary?

322. Do we need no further teachings on this subject than reason thus communicates?

323. How soon, after transgression, does amendment become a duty?

324. Why should every means of improving our moral nature be employed?

325. What should we employ as means of such improvement?

326. Why is it especially necessary to avoid bad company?

327. Is it proper to be contented with any attainments we may have already made in virtue, or to forget the claims of our future being?

## CHAPTER III.

## TEMPERANCE, OR SELF-GOVERNMENT.

THIS duty is strongly recommended by the light of nature; and revelation enforces it by the weight of its high authority: "Let your moderation be known unto all men;" "Live soberly."

328. This moderation is to be used in reference to bodily enjoyments; to sorrow for the loss of our friends or of property; and to the indulgence of the desires and affections of the mind.

(1.) We are to exercise *temperance in our bodily gratifications*. Much of what we owe to ourselves as rational and accountable beings is included in this view of moderation. There is no part of our duty which requires more continued self-denial in its practice. This subject has been treated with sufficient fullness in Book II. chap. IV. sect. III., on the government of the appetites and passions. That section it may be profitable to review in this connection.

(2.) Temperance, or self-government, implies *moderation in the indulgence of sorrow on account of the loss of friends or of property*. Reason, indeed, suggests this. No extreme of sorrow can be of avail in restoring to us the blessings of which, by the providence of God we are deprived; and it becomes us, even on this ground, to restrain those painful emotions which bereavements naturally awaken. But Christianity enforces this duty on higher grounds, and by the most persuasive and powerful motives and examples.

(3.) In self-government, is included *moderation in indulging the desires of the mind*. In the proper regulation of these desires consists a large part of true morality; also, in seeking their gratification only in subordination to the divine authority, and to the higher ends of our being. According to the affections and desires habitually entertained in the heart, will be the tenor of the conduct; and no reformation, therefore, can be effectual,

which aims not at the thorough melioration of the inward, as well as the outward man. See Book II. chap. V.

[Dewar, vol. ii. pp. 471, 472.]

328. In regard to what objects is moderation to be exercised ?

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## CHAPTER IV.

### FORTITUDE.

329. FORTITUDE is that virtue, in the exercise of which we are enabled to conduct ourselves with propriety in regard to the difficulties and dangers of life ; so as neither to betray ourselves by unreasonable fear, nor rashly to put ourselves in the way of evil.

It is by fortitude that we can guard from injury those rights which the Creator has given us, and prepare to meet the evils which threaten us from a distance. It is the same virtue which keeps the mind from sinking under present and unavoidable calamities, and animates it to endure, with patience and resignation to the will of God, what it can neither control nor remove. It is clearly connected with self-control, without a considerable share of which, none can be eminently good or great.

[Dewar, vol. ii. pp. 497, 498.]

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329. What virtue under the name of fortitude is it our duty to cultivate and exercise ?

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## CHAPTER V.

### ON THE FORMATION OF GOOD HABITS.

330. THE obligation to form good habits arises from the fact that man has been made capable of forming habits, and is very much the creature of habit, and hence it is of great importance that this law of his nature should be turned to a good account.

331. The *end of education* should be, not merely the communication of knowledge—this is but one of its advantages—but the training of the mind, the calling forth

of good dispositions, and the suppression of the bad, and the formation of those habits that will prepare for the successful discharge of the duties of life.

It will not be attempted to enumerate here the different habits, to the formation of which we should give our attention. The subject will be introduced again in the next chapter, and has been considered in Book II. chap. II. sect. III.

332. **INDUSTRY** is specially important. This is of the greatest value to man in regard to everything that tends to elevate him in goodness, in greatness, or in happiness.

\* \* \* "All is the gift of industry:  
Whate'er exalts, embellishes, and renders life delightful."

[Dewar, vol. ii. p. 500.]

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330. Whence arises to man the obligation to form good habits?

331. What then should be the principal object of education?

332. But what habit is there which deserves special notice, from its direct influence on our religious and moral improvement, on the equability of our temper, and on the permanence of our happiness?

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## CHAPTER VI.

### PRUDENCE, OR A SUITABLE REGARD TO OUR OWN HAPPINESS.

#### SECTION I.—NATURE OF THE DUTY, AND THE MANNER OF PERFORMING IT.

333. **THE** virtue of prudence implies a steady regard, in the conduct of life, to the happiness and perfection of our own nature, and a diligent study of the means by which these ends may be attained.

334. It is merely a constitutional principle, and inseparable from the nature of man as a rational and sensitive being. Its moral character depends on the direction it is allowed to take, and its deference to higher principles and rules of action.

It is regarded by all men as a duty to promote their own happiness, and we censure those who neglect to do this. The sanctions of law, both human and divine, imply an obligation to regard our own happiness. This



duty is implied in the fundamental law of morality, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as *thyself*." It is therefore our duty to promote our own happiness no less than that of our neighbor. It is also an inspired injunction, "Do *thyself* no harm." It must also be considered right to exercise any of our constitutional principles, under certain restrictions.

335. If we could at once gratify all the propensities of our nature, that would be our highest possible happiness, and what we might call our SOVEREIGN GOOD; but that cannot be; for our own propensities and desires are often inconsistent, so that if we comply with one, we must contradict another. He who is enslaved to sensuality, cannot at the same time enjoy the more lofty pleasures of science and virtue; and he who devotes himself to science or adheres to virtue, must often act in opposition to his inferior appetites. The ambitious man cannot labor for the acquisition of power, and taste the sweets of indolence at the same time. The miser, while he indulges himself in the contemplation of his wealth, must be a stranger to the pleasures of beneficence. *The gratification of all our appetites and desires at once is, therefore, impossible.*

336. Since all the desires and appetites of our nature cannot be gratified at once, it is necessary for us to form to ourselves or to adopt some plan or system of conduct, in subordination to which all other objects are to be secured. To ascertain what this system ought to be, is a problem which in all ages employed the speculations of philosophers. Among the ancients, the question concerning the *sovereign good* was the principal subject of controversy which divided the schools; and it was treated in such a manner as to involve almost every other question of ethics.

It is obvious, from what has been said above, that some degree of *self-denial* must be practiced by every man, whether good or bad—by the ruffian as well as the saint; and man's greatest possible happiness must be, at least in the present state, not a complete gratification of all our propensities, but the most comprehensive gratification of which we are capable.

333. What is implied in the duty of prudence?

334. Has the desire of happiness (the principle of self-love) any moral character: is it an object either of approbation or of blame?

335. Is happiness to be attained by giving every appetite and desire the gratification they demand?

336. Since all the appetites and desires of our nature cannot be gratified at once, how is the largest amount of happiness to be secured?

## SECTION II.—SYSTEMS OF THE GRECIAN SCHOOLS, IN RELATION TO HAPPINESS.

337. THE opinions entertained by the ancients respecting the sovereign, or supreme good, may all be reduced to three: those of the Epicureans, of the Stoics, and of the Peripatetics. To one or other of these three opinions may be referred all merely human schemes of happiness.

338. The *fundamental principle of the Epicurean system* was, that bodily pleasure and pain were the sole ultimate objects of desire and aversion. These were desired and shunned on their own account; other things were desired and valued according to their tendency to procure the one of these, or to save us from the other. This system placed happiness in ease of body and tranquillity of mind, but much more in the latter than in the former, insomuch that Epicurus affirmed a wise man might be happy in the midst of bodily torments. It is a system which tends avowedly to recommend a life of indolent and selfish indulgence, and a total abstraction from the concerns and duties of the world. Hence many of the disciples of Epicurus brought so much discredit on their principles by the dissoluteness of their lives, that the word *Epicurean* came gradually to be understood as characteristic of a person devoted to sensual gratifications.

The influence of these principles on the manners of the later Romans has been remarked by many writers, and was foreseen, ages before, by their virtuous and enlightened ancestors. This fact, which has not been sufficiently attended to, deserves the serious consideration of those who call in question the effect of speculative opinions on national character.

[D. Stewart's Works, vol. v. pp. 494, 495.]

339. In opposition to the Epicurean doctrine already stated, the *Stoical system* placed the supreme good in rectitude of conduct, without any regard to the event. It did not, however, as has been supposed, recommend

an indifference to external objects, nor a life of inactivity and apathy. On the contrary, it taught that nature pointed out to us certain objects of choice and of rejection, and among these some to be *more* chosen and avoided than others; and that virtue consisted in choosing and rejecting objects according to their intrinsic value.

The Stoical system, so far from withdrawing men from the duties of life, was eminently favorable to social and active virtue. Its *peculiar and distinguishing tenet* was, that our happiness did not depend on the attainment of the objects of our choice, but on the part that we acted; but this principle was inculcated *not* to damp our exertions, but to lead us to rest our happiness only on circumstances which we ourselves could command. Their system inculcated that prudence and propriety should be consulted and followed, and then we should give ourselves no trouble about the consequences, but be satisfied with any that might ensue, and submit to the will of the higher powers. They believed that whatever happens is calculated to produce the highest good of the universe.

340. The Epicurean system was one of selfishness and prudent indulgence, which placed happiness in a seclusion from care, and in an indifference to all the concerns of mankind. By the Stoics, on the contrary, virtue was supposed to consist in the affectionate performance of any good office toward their fellow-creatures, and in full resignation to Providence for everything independent of their own choice.

341. The *Peripatetic system* maintained that it was not the *mere possession*, but the *exercise* of virtue that made men happy; and for the proper exercise of virtue they thought that prosperity was as necessary as light is for the exercise of the faculty of sight.

All these three sects acknowledged the necessity of virtue, or allowed that, in every well-directed pursuit of happiness, the strictest regard to morality was required. The Stoics alone maintained that this regard itself was happiness; or that to run the course of an active, strenuous, wise, and beneficent mind, was itself the very good which we ought to pursue.

It is obvious also, from the opinions now reviewed, that happiness arises chiefly from the mind, and not from the external circumstances of man.

337. What opinions were entertained by the ancients respecting the sovereign or supreme good ?

338. What was the fundamental principle of the Epicurean system ?

339. What was the opinion of the Stoics ?

340. How may the Epicurean and Stoical systems be compared ?

341. What was the doctrine of the Peripatetics ?

### SECTION III.—INFLUENCE OF TEMPER UPON OUR HAPPINESS.

342. Our happiness is influenced by our *temper*, *imagination*, *opinions*, and *habits*.

343. The word temper is here used to denote the habitual state of a man's mind in point of irascibility, or, in other words, to mark the habitual predominance of the benevolent or malevolent affections in his intercourse with his fellow-creatures.

There is a secret charm annexed by the Creator to every exercise of good-will and of kindness; while He has imposed a check on all the discordant passions, by connecting with them agitation and disquietude. Hence our happiness must very much depend on which of these kinds of affection we most indulge.

There is nothing in which our temporal happiness is so much in our power as in the formation of temper, and nothing will more conduce to our future welfare than wise exertions on this point.

A proud, irritable, discontented, and quarrelsome person can never be happy. He has within himself, and he employs, sure means to imbitter life, whatever may be his external circumstances.

344. Some persons render themselves wretched by dwelling too much on the follies and vices of the age; by censorious thoughts and feelings in respect to others; by a jealous and suspicious examination of the motives which influence the conduct of their neighbors. That favorable opinions of our species, and those benevolent affections toward them which such opinions produce, are sources of exquisite enjoyment to those who entertain them, cannot be disputed. While we do what we can to reform mankind, our chief business is to watch over our own characters. The great secret of present happiness is, to study to accommodate our own minds to things external, rather than to accommodate things external to ourselves, especially in our intercourse with our fellow-creatures. So far as we fail in our endeavors to make them what



they should be, we must accommodate our views and feelings to the order of Providence. It is of great importance also that we do not imagine mankind worse than they really are, and thereby bring upon ourselves a temper full of suspicion, hatred, anger, and contempt toward others, which is a constant state of misery, much worse than all the evils to be feared from credulity.

345. It is not an uncommon error to imagine that temper is as little dependent on the will as the length of the arm or the color of the skin. But this imagination is an unfounded prejudice, and produces the most unhappy effects. Persons first permit themselves to think they can do nothing in the formation of temper, and then they attempt nothing, but allow it to grow up in wild luxuriance. Notwithstanding all that may be said about natural constitution, and the influence of organic tendencies, it may be proved that we can subject temper to the discipline of reason, and form it in any mold according to our pleasure. The irascible passions appear as early, and are as difficult to subjugate, as any others; but we see that the most fretful and impatient persons, who are perpetually harassing their dependents with their peevishness and their intemperate sallies, are able to restrain their ebullitions when in the presence of a superior, or in the company of an equal who would chastise them for outrageous conduct.

*Expedients for improving our Temper, and thus promoting our Happiness.*

346. (1.) We should cultivate that candor with respect to the motives of others which results from attending to our own infirmities, and from considering the numerous circumstances which, independently of criminal intention, may produce the *appearance* of vice in human conduct.

(2.) We should suppress, as far as possible, the external signs of peevishness or of violence. It is said of Socrates, that, whenever he felt resentment rising in his mind, he became instantly silent; and by observing this practice, he doubtless avoided many an occasion of giving offense to others, and added much to the comfort of his own life, by killing the seeds of those malignant affections which are the great bane of human happiness.

Next to silence, "a soft answer turneth away wrath," not only in the hearer, but in the speaker.

347. The same causes which alienate our affections from our fellow-creatures are apt to suggest unfavorable views of the course of human affairs, and lead the mind, by an easy transition, to gloomy conceptions of the general order of the universe. In this state of mind, when, in the language of Hamlet, "*man delights us not*," the sentiment of misanthropy is transferred to other objects. "This goodly frame, the earth, appears a sterile promontory; this majestical roof, fretted with golden fires, a foul and pestilential congregation of vapors; and man himself—noble in reason, infinite in faculties—this beauty of the world—this paragon of animals, seems but the quintessence of dust."

It is important here to add the caution, however, that we must not, for the sake of our own quietude, form an erroneously favorable view of human character or affairs, but rather cultivate that benevolence of heart which does not rejoice or fret at the iniquities of men, but seeks to reform men for their good, and in obedience to their Maker and Sovereign.

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342. What influences upon our happiness may profitably be considered?

343. What is meant by temper, and what is its influence?

344. By what process is the temper sometimes impaired and made a source of wretchedness?

345. What important error is entertained by some concerning temper, and how may they be convinced of their error?

346. What expedients may be adopted for improving our temper, and thus promoting our happiness?

347. What other circumstance increases the influence of temper on happiness?

#### SECTION IV.—INFLUENCE OF IMAGINATION ON OUR HAPPINESS.

348. ONE of the principal effects of a liberal education is to accustom us to withdraw our attention from the objects of our present perceptions, and to dwell at pleasure on the past, the absent, and the future. How much it must enlarge in this way the sphere of our enjoyment or suffering is obvious; for (not to mention the recollection of the past) all that part of our happiness or misery which arises from our *hopes* or our *fears*, derives its existence entirely from the power of imagination. This faculty indeed, though strengthened and enlivened by education, is sometimes equally vigorous in the uneducated.

When the hopes or the fears which imagination inspires prevail over the present importunity of our sensual appetites, it is a proof of the superiority which the intellectual part of our character has acquired over the animal; and as the course of life which wisdom and virtue prescribe requires frequently a sacrifice of the *present* to the *future*, a warm and vigorous imagination is sometimes of essential use, by exhibiting those lively prospects of solid and permanent happiness which may counteract the allurements of present pleasure.

349. Upon persons who are enslaved by their sensual appetites, a warm imagination exerts a pernicious influence. In those persons, it may operate in anticipating future gratification, or it may blend itself with memory in the recollection of past enjoyment; and thus unhappily it contributes to strengthen the empire of animal desires, by filling up the intervals of actual indulgence with habits of thought, more degrading and ruinous, if possible, to the rational part of our being, than the time which is employed in criminal gratification. In such individuals, imagination is but a prolongation of sensual indulgences, and scarcely merits the appellation of an intellectual power.

Imagination is the Paphian shop,  
Where feeble happiness, like Vulcan, lame,  
Bids foul ideas, in their dark recess,  
And hot as hell (which kindled the black fires)  
With wanton art, those fatal arrows form,  
Which murder all thy time, health, wealth, and fame.  
Wouldst thou receive them? other thoughts there are,  
On angel wing, descending from above,  
Which these, with art divine, would counterwork,  
And form celestial armor for thy peace.

YOUNG.

The influence of imagination in adding to our enjoyments or sufferings is chiefly seen in the predominance of *hope* or *fear* in the habitual state of our minds. One man is continually led by the complexion of his temper, to forebode evil to himself and to the world; while another, after a thousand disappointments, looks forward to the future with exultation, and feels his confidence in Providence unshaken.

Many of the mortifications and disgusts which imbitter life, proceed not from any positive evils, hunger or cold, pain or disease, but from false estimates, fictitious wants, and imaginary grievances.

350. The *chief sources of a desponding imagination* are superstition and skepticism. Of the former, the unhappy victims are many, and have been so in all ages of the world, although their number may be expected to diminish, in proportion to the progress and diffusion of knowledge. Skepticism, when extreme, as it encourages the notion that all events are regulated by chance, if it does not alarm the mind, extinguishes at least every ray of hope.

351. This faculty requires an uncommon share of good sense to keep it under proper regulation, and to derive from it the pleasures it was intended to afford, without suffering it either to mislead the judgment in the conduct of life, or to impair our relish for the moderate gratifications which are provided for our present condition. The inconveniences resulting from an ill-regulated imagination are fully exhibited by Dugald Stewart in his *Philosophy of the Mind*, vol. i.

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348. What is the influence of imagination on our happiness?

349. What injurious influence does a warm imagination exert on those who are enslaved by their sensual appetites?

350. What, beside constitutional biases, are the chief sources of a desponding imagination?

351. What remark may be made on the regulation and culture of the imagination?

#### SECTION V.—INFLUENCE OF OPINIONS UPON HAPPINESS.

352. THIS subject is discussed at length in Dr. Ferguson's *Moral and Political Science*. The following are some of the doctrines advanced:—

“It is unhappy to consider perfection as the standard by which we are to censure others, not as the rule by which we are to conduct ourselves.

“It is a wretched opinion, that happiness consists in a freedom from trouble, or in having nothing to do.

“In consequence of this opinion, men complain of what might employ them agreeably. By declining every duty and every active engagement, they render life a burden, and they complain that it is so.

“It is unhappy to entertain an opinion, that anything can amuse us better than the duties of our station, or than that which we are in the present moment called upon to do.

“It is an unhappy opinion, that beneficence is an effect



of self-denial, or that we lay our fellow creatures under great obligations by the kindness we do them.

“It is happy to have continually in view that we are members of society, and of the community of mankind; that we are instruments in the hand of God for the good of his creatures; that if we are bad members of society, or unwilling instruments in the hand of God, we do our utmost to counteract our nature, to abandon our station, and to undo ourselves.

“*‘I am in the station which God has assigned me,’* says Epictetus. With this reflection a man may be happy in every station; without it, he cannot be happy in any.”

353. Most men fall into gross inconsistencies in their expectations of happiness, as well as in the estimates they form of the prosperity of others. The following passage, which is an elegant and practical commentary of Mrs. Barbauld upon a passage from Epictetus, will fully justify this assertion:—

“As most of the unhappiness in the world arises rather from disappointed desires than from positive evil, it is of the utmost consequence to attain just notions of the laws and order of the universe, that we may not vex ourselves with fruitless wishes, or give way to groundless and unreasonable discontent.

“We should consider this world as a great mart of commerce, where fortune (providence) exposes to our view various commodities, riches, ease, tranquillity, fame, integrity, knowledge. Everything is marked at a settled price. Our time, our labor, our ingenuity, is so much ready money, which we are to lay out to the best advantage. Examine, compare, choose, reject; but stand to your own judgment, and do not, like children, when you have purchased one thing, repine that you do not possess another which you did not purchase.

“Such is the force of well-directed industry, that a steady and vigorous exertion of our faculties, directed to one end, will generally insure success. Would you, for instance, be rich? Do you think that single point worth the sacrificing everything else to? You may then be rich. Thousands have become so from the lowest beginnings, by toil and patient diligence, and attention to the minutest articles of expense and profit.

“But you must give up the pleasures of leisure, of a

vacant mind, of a free, unsuspicious temper. If you preserve your integrity, it must be a coarse and vulgar honesty. Those high and lofty notions of morals which you brought with you from the schools must be considerably lowered, and mixed with the baser alloy of a jealous and worldly-minded prudence. You must learn to do hard, if not unjust things; and for the nice embarrassments of a delicate and ingenuous spirit, it is necessary for you to get rid of them as fast as possible. You must shut your heart against the Muses, and be content to feed your understanding with plain, household truths. In short, you must not attempt to enlarge your ideas, or polish your taste, or refine your sentiments, but must keep on in one beaten track, without turning aside either to the right hand or to the left. 'But I cannot submit to drudgery like this. I feel a spirit above it.' 'Tis well; be above it then; only do not repine that you are not rich.

"Is knowledge the pearl of price? That too may be purchased—by steady application, and long, solitary hours of study and reflection. Bestow these, and you shall be wise. 'But,' says the man of letters, 'what a hardship is it, that many who are grossly illiterate shall raise a fortune, and make a figure, while I have little more than the conveniences of life.' But, was it in order to raise a fortune that you consumed the sprightly hours of youth in study and retirement? You have then mistaken your path, and ill-employed your industry. 'What reward have I then for all my labors?' What reward! A large and comprehensive soul, well purged from vulgar fears, and perturbations, and prejudices; able to comprehend and interpret the works of man and of God; a rich, flourishing, cultivated mind, possessed of inexhaustible stores of entertainment and reflection; a perpetual spring of fresh ideas; and the conscious dignity of superior intelligence. Good heaven! and what reward can you ask beside?

"'But is it not some reproach upon the economy of Providence that such a one, who is a mean, dirty fellow, should have amassed wealth enough to buy half a nation?' Not in the least. He made himself a mean, dirty fellow, for that very end. He has paid his health, his liberty, his conscience for it; and will you envy him his bargain? Will you hang your head, and blush in his presence, be-

cause he outshines you in equipage and show? Lift up your brow with a noble confidence, and say to yourself, 'I have not these things, it is true; but it is because I have not sought,—because I have not desired them; it is because I possess something better.' I have chosen my lot; I am content and satisfied.'

"If you would be a philosopher, these are the terms. You must do thus and thus: there is no other way. If not, go and be one of the vulgar."

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352. What is the influence of opinions upon happiness?

353. Into what inconsistencies do most men fall, in their expectations of happiness, as well as in the estimates they form of the prosperity of others?

#### SECTION VI.—INFLUENCE OF HABITS ON HAPPINESS.

354. IT is the effect of habit to reconcile us to inconveniences in our situation, and to enable us to overcome difficulties in the pathway of life. It was therefore a wise counsel of Pythagoras: "Choose that course of action which is best, and custom will soon render it the most agreeable."

"The art in which the secret of human happiness in a great measure consists," says Dr. Paley, "is to *set* the habits in such a manner, that every change may be a change for the better. Whatever is made habitual becomes smooth and easy, and nearly indifferent. The return to an old habit is likewise easy, whatever the habit be. Therefore the advantage is with those habits which allow of indulgence in the deviation from them. The luxurious receive no greater pleasure from their dainties than the peasant does from his bread and cheese; but the peasant, whenever he goes abroad, finds a *feast*, whereas the epicure must be well entertained to escape disgust. A reader who has inured himself to books of science and argumentation, if a novel, a well-written pamphlet, an article of news, a narrative of a curious voyage, or the journal of a traveler comes in his way, sits down to the repast with relish; enjoys his entertainment while it lasts, and can return when it is over to his graver reading without distaste. Another, with whom nothing will go down but works of humor and pleasantry, or whose curiosity must be interested by perpetual novelty, will consume a bookseller's window in half a fore-

noon, during which time he is rather in search of diversion than diverted; and as books to his taste are few and short (they are not so now-a-days), and rapidly read over, the stock is soon exhausted, when he is left without resource from this principal supply of harmless amusement." Books of this class, at present, so far from being harmless, are in general lamentably adverse to happiness, because destructive of morality.

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354. What is the influence of habits on happiness?

#### SECTION VII.—COMPARISON OF DIFFERENT CLASSES OF ENJOYMENTS.

355. Our enjoyments may be distributed into those of sense, of imagination, of the understanding, of the social and moral powers.

356. The *pleasures of the outward senses* are common to man and to the brutes, and notwithstanding the space they occupy in the imagination of most men, they must be allowed to stand at the bottom of the scale, and must be ranked among the lowest gratifications of our nature. When pursued too far, they bring disgust, and even pain along with them; they please not upon reflection, as intellectual and moral exertions please; they tend to disqualify us for the nobler delights of science and virtue; they depend not on ourselves, but on other persons and things; we lose all taste for them in adversity; and often they are followed to such an extreme as to destroy health, property, fame, intellect, and moral sensibilities, thus producing a complete wreck of human happiness.

The result of these observations, is, *not* that the pleasures of sense are unworthy the regard of a wise man, but that they *should be confined within those limits* which are marked out by the obvious intentions of nature.

357. There is a grand defect, however, in all worldly sources of enjoyment. Human experience universally declares that there is often found disappointment in the pursuit of them, more or less dissatisfaction in the enjoyment of them, and a painful uncertainty in the possession.

358. The *pleasures of the imagination* are unquestionably of a higher rank than those of sense, and may be protracted to a much longer period without any danger of injuring the health, or of impairing the faculties. On



the contrary, they tend to raise the taste above the grossness of sensuality, and to diminish the temptation to vicious indulgences, by furnishing agreeable and innocent resources for filling up the blanks of life. By supplying us too with pleasures more refined than those the senses afford, they gradually prepare us for the still higher enjoyments which belong to us as rational and moral beings ; and indeed, when properly regulated, may subserve, in a high degree, both our intellectual and moral improvement.

Even to this class of our pleasures, certain limits are prescribed by nature. When prolonged beyond due bounds we lose our relish for them, and feel a desire for more active engagements. In many cases of excessive indulgence they produce a bad effect on the moral character, by their tendency to unfit us for action, and to give us a disrelish for real life. This is one bad effect of novel-reading.

359. By the *pleasures of the understanding* are meant the pleasures arising from the exercise of our reasoning and of our inventive powers. Of this kind, (1.) is the pleasure of *investigation*, which resolves itself partly into the pleasure of activity, partly into that resulting from the employment of skill, partly into that arising from expectation and hope, or, in other words, from the anticipation of discovery.

(2.) The pleasure of *generalization*, or of rising from particular truths to comprehensive theorems,—a process which, beside the satisfaction it yields by the relief it brings the memory, communicates to us a sentiment of our intellectual power, by subjecting completely to our command a mass of information which before only served to distract our attention and to oppress our faculties.

(3.) To all this we may add the pleasure resulting from the gratification of *curiosity*, and from the discovery of *truth*.

(4.) With these pleasures, various accessory ones are combined ; the pleasure, for example, of *extensive usefulness*, when our studies happen to be directed to objects interesting to mankind ; the pleasure arising from the gratification of *ambition* ; and the social satisfaction of *communicating our knowledge* to others.

(5.) Perhaps, however, the principal recommendation of this class of our pleasures is derived from the constant

and inexhaustible resources they supply to the mind in its progress through life. In this respect they possess many advantages over the pleasures of imagination, as they may be extended to a much longer period without satiety or desire of change, and are frequently enjoyed with increasing relish in old age; while on the other hand, the objects which interest the imagination gradually lose their charms when we begin to engage in the business of the world, and furnish at best but relaxation to diversify our habitual and more serious occupations.

(6.) Upon the whole, among various *subordinate* pursuits to which men are led to devote themselves by inclination or taste (*subordinate*, for we do not speak at present of our moral duties), a turn for science may be safely pronounced to be the happiest of any, and *that* which we may venture, with the greatest confidence, to recommend to youth as the most solid foundation for the future comfort of their lives; more particularly when we consider how very little the pleasures of the understanding depend on external circumstances, and on the vicissitudes of life.

The joys of sense, to mental joys are mean;  
Sense on the present only feeds; the soul  
On past, and future, forages for joy.  
'Tis hers, by retrospect, through time to range;  
And forward time's great sequel to survey.

YOUNG.

360. Under the title of *pleasures of the heart*, are comprehended, the pleasures of benevolence, of friendship, of love, of pity, of enjoying the favor and esteem of others, and, above all, the pleasure resulting from the consciousness of doing our *duty*: the purest and most exquisite enjoyments of which we have any experience, and which, by blending in one way or other with our other gratifications, impart to them their principal charm.

Hence the wisest plan of economy, with respect to our pleasures, is not merely compatible with a strict observance of the rules of morality, but is, in a great measure, comprehended in these rules; and, therefore, the happiness, as well as the perfection of our nature consists in doing our duty, with as little solicitude as possible about the event.

Pleasure, we both agree, is man's chief good :  
 Our only contest, what deserves the name.  
 Give pleasure's name to naught, but what has pass'd  
 Th' authentic soul of reason, \* \* \* \* \*  
 \* \* \* \* \* and defies  
 The tooth of time ; when past, a pleasure still :  
 Dearer on trial, lovelier for its age,  
 And doubly to be prized, as it promotes  
 Our future, while it forms our present joy.  
 Some joys the future overcast ; and some  
 Throw all their beams that way, and gild the tomb.  
 Some joys endear eternity ; some give  
 Abhor'd annihilation dreadful charms.  
 Are rival joys contending for thy choice ?  
 Consult thy whole existence, and be safe :  
 That oracle will put all doubt to flight.  
 Short is the lesson, though my lecture long :  
*Be good*—and heaven shall answer for the rest.

YOUNG.

There is, indeed, a *remarkable tendency in virtuous habits to systematize the conduct for the purpose of happiness*, and to open up all the various sources of enjoyment in our constitution, without suffering any one to encroach upon the rest. *They establish a proper balance among our different principles of action*, and, by doing so, produce a greater source of enjoyment, on the whole, than we could have obtained by allowing any one in particular to gain an ascendant over our conduct.

361. It is not right, however, to suppose, as some do, that *virtue* is only another name for rational *self-love*. They coincide so wonderfully together, as to illustrate, in a striking manner, the unity as well as the beneficence of design in the human constitution. But still, notwithstanding these happy effects of a virtuous life, the principle of duty, and the desire of happiness, are radically distinct from each other.

To this it may be added, that if the desire of happiness were the sole, or even the governing principle of action in a good man, it could scarcely fail to frustrate its own object, by filling the mind with anxious conjectures about futurity, and with perplexing calculations of the various chances of good and evil : whereas he, whose ruling principle of action is a sense of duty, conducts himself in life with boldness, consistency, and dignity ; and finds himself rewarded with that happiness which so often eludes the pursuit of those who exert every faculty of the mind in order to attain it.

362. In promoting our own happiness, *the great duty*

*which we owe to ourselves* is to promote our real interests, not for any detached period, but throughout the whole of our existence.

This cannot be done without performing our duty to God and our neighbor. God has established a close connection betwixt our duty and our interest; by performing the one we shall assuredly promote the other.  
**DUTY IS THE GRAND MEANS OF HAPPINESS.**

Pleasure, due only when all duty's done.

POLLOCK.

[Stewart's Works, vol. v. pp. 487-553; Beattie's Moral Science, 247-252; Fergus on Nature and Revelation.]

355. Into what classes may our enjoyments be distributed?

356. What estimate ought to be put on the pleasures of the outward senses?

357. What is the grand defect of all worldly sources of enjoyment and possession?

358. What estimate shall we put on the pleasures of the imagination?

359. What comparative place is due to the pleasures of the understanding?

360. How shall the pleasures be considered which result from the social and moral powers; or, in other words, the pleasures of the heart?

361. Is it right then to suppose, as some do, that virtue is only another name for rational self-love?

362. What should especially be borne in mind in promoting our own happiness?

#### SECTION VIII.—INJUSTICE TO PROVIDENCE IN THE COMPUTATION OF OUR PLEASURES AND OUR PAINS.

363. (1.) WE are accustomed to number the hours which are spent in distress or sorrow, but to forget those which have passed away, if not in high enjoyment, yet in the midst of those gentle satisfactions and placid emotions which make life glide smoothly along.

(2.) We complain of the frequent disappointments we suffer in our pursuits. But we recollect not, that it is in pursuit more than in attainment, that our pleasure now consists. In the present state of human nature, man derives more enjoyment from the exertion of his active powers in the midst of toils and efforts, than he could receive from a still and uniform possession of the object which he strives to gain. "I have lived long enough to learn," said Dr. Adam Clarke, "that the *great secret of human happiness* is this: *never suffer your energies to stagnate*. The old adage of 'too many irons in the fire'



conveys an untruth. You cannot have too many—poker, tongs, and all—keep them all going.”

(3.) If pains be scattered through all the conditions of life, so also are pleasures. When the human condition appears most depressed, the feelings of men, through the gracious appointment of Providence, adjust themselves wonderfully to their state, and enable them to extract satisfaction from sources that are totally unknown to others.

(4.) Many of the evils which occasion our complaints are wholly imaginary. They derive their existence from fancy and humor, and childish subjection to the opinions of others. The distress which they produce is indeed real; but its reality does not arise from the nature of things, but from that disorder of imagination which a small measure of reflection might rectify.

(5.) A great proportion of evils is brought upon us by our own misconduct. The ungoverned passions of men betray them into a thousand follies; their follies, into crimes; and their crimes, into calamities. Yet nothing is more common than for such as have been the authors of their own misery, to make loud complaints of the hard fate of men.

(6.) It is admitted that there are evils which are both real and unavoidable; from which neither wisdom nor goodness can procure our exemption. But under these evils, this comfort remains, that if they cannot be prevented, there are means appointed by Divine Providence, by which they may be much alleviated. Religion is the great principle which acts, under such circumstances, in aid of human happiness. It inspires fortitude, supports patience, and, by its prospects and promises, darts a cheering ray into the darkest shade of human life.

The tendency of divine revelation to promote human happiness, is fully considered in the last chapter of the volume, and may be profitably read in connection with the present chapter.

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363. In what respects are we unjust to Divine Providence in the computation of our pleasures and our pains?

## BOOK VI.—PART II.

## OF THE DUTIES WHICH RESPECT OTHER BEINGS.

IN the remainder of the volume, these duties are drawn from various sources. (1.) From the two fundamental laws, of love to God, and to our neighbor. (2.) From the golden rule of our Savior. (3.) From St. Paul's description of love in 1 Cor. xv. (4.) From a view of man under certain general relations. (5.) From the Ten Commandments. (6.) From the biography of Christ and his followers.

## CHAPTER I.

## THE TWO GREAT LAWS OF REVEALED MORALITY.

364. THE two great laws of human duty recognized by our Savior, but drawn from the Mosaic writings, are in the following words:—"THOU SHALT LOVE THE LORD THY GOD WITH ALL THY HEART, WITH ALL THY SOUL, WITH ALL THY MIND, WITH ALL THY STRENGTH; this is the first and great commandment; and the second is like unto it: THOU SHALT LOVE THY NEIGHBOR AS THYSELF. On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets."

[Matt. xxii. 37-39; Mark xii. 30-33.]

364. What are the two great laws of human duty?

## SECTION I.—LOVE TO GOD.

365. THE following are perhaps some of the best *definitions* that can be furnished of the nature of this principle:—

(1.) It is such a reverential admiration of God's perfections in general, and such a grateful sense of his goodness in particular, as render the contemplation and the worship of Him delightful to us, and produce in us a constant desire and endeavor to please him in every part of our moral and religious conduct. [Bishop Porteus.]

(2.) Love to God, though one affection, includes in it especially the three following things:—*Complacency in*

*the divine character, gratitude for the divine goodness, and delight in the divine happiness.*

Love to God is love to Him for *what he is*, and for *all* that he is. It must regard Him in his entire character.

Every existing creature owes to its Creator all that it is, and has, and hopes for; and from every creature that is capable of knowing God, gratitude is due to Him for its being and for its well-being. The complacency referred to is love to God for what He is, and for the benevolence of his nature as manifested to creation in general; gratitude is love to Him for his kindness to us personally; to us relatively, as members of families and communities.

The Deity ought also to be the first of the objects of benevolence or good-will, in the bosoms of his intelligent offspring, though he does not need their benevolence. By every right-hearted creature a pure and intense sympathy must be experienced with the blessedness of Deity, whether flowing from His own exhaustless self-sufficiency, or from the accomplishment of the purposes of his goodness and righteousness.

It is impossible that the love to God, which has been described, can exist and operate in any mind, but in proportion as that mind is in a state of moral unison with the mind of the Deity; and wherever this is the case, the "keeping of God's commandments" will be its unfailing indication.

[Wardlaw.]

(3.) Love naturally transforms itself into the performance of all the relative duties which arise from the circumstances of the persons related. Thus, in the present case, if we love God, and consider him as the Lord and Governor of the world, our love will soon become obedience; if we consider him as wise, good, and gracious, our love will become honor, adoration, and gratitude; if we add to these our natural weakness and infirmity, love will teach us dependence, and prompt us, in all our wants, to fly for refuge to our great Protector; and thus, in all other instances, may all the particular duties be drawn from this general principle. Hence its *fundamental nature* is apparent.

[Sherlock.]

366. The love which we owe to God is the same in *nature* with that which we owe to all created intelligent

beings; but they are, of course, to be loved in subordination to Him, from whom we cannot withhold the supreme love of our hearts during every period of our being, without extreme injustice and criminality. The *degree* of love forms the next subject of our consideration.

367. The terms of the law in respect to this point are very explicit: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with *all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength.*"

The affection here required, therefore, must be as large as the powers of the soul itself, and must engross the whole, to the exclusion of all *contrary* affections, and the regulation and moderation of all *other* affections, in entire subordination and subservience to this governing principle; so that nothing should in any sense or in any degree be loved by us but for the Lord's sake, and according to his commandment.

(1.) *He* loves God *with all his heart* who loves nothing in *comparison* of him, and nothing but in *reference* to Him—who is ready to give up, do, or suffer anything in order to please and glorify Him.

(2.) *He* loves God *with all his soul*, or, rather, with *all his life*, who is ready to give up *life* for his sake; to be deprived of all sorts of comforts and endure all sorts of torments rather than dishonor God; who employs *life*, with all its comforts and conveniences, as means of glorifying God.

(3.) *He* loves God *with all his strength* who, for the honor of his Maker, spares neither *labor* nor *cost*; who employs in his service all his goods, his talents, his power, credit, authority, and influence.

(4.) *He* loves God with all his *mind*, or intellect, who applies himself only to *know* God and his holy will; who receives with submission, gratitude, and pleasure, the sacred *truths* which God has revealed to man; who forms no projects nor designs but in reference to God and the interests of mankind; who banishes from his understanding and memory every useless, foolish, and dangerous thought, together with every *idea* which has any tendency to defile his soul or turn it for a moment from the *center* of eternal repose.

[Dr. Adam Clarke.]

368. The first and the natural expression of love to God is OBEDIENCE TO HIS WILL. It is of the nature of love



to prompt to a compliance with the will of the beloved object.

By obedience to the will of God, we mean the whole of our duty as accountable creatures. Every duty, whether its direct object be God, our fellow-creatures, or ourselves, is a duty which we owe to God ; and that morality must therefore be extremely defective which does not proceed from the principle of love to God. This has been proved in a previous chapter.

The *law of God is the expression of His will*, who is infinitely wise, just, and good ; it is nothing else than the measure and rule of that obedience which the natures of God and man make necessary from the one to the other.

The *obligation to render this obedience* arises from the relations necessarily subsisting between a created and dependent moral agent and the great Creator. The law which he gives to his creatures is the standard and directory, as to the nature and extent of that love and service which were *previously and necessarily due*.

*Its authority* is not at all affected by the way in which it is made known to us—that being the same, whether it is ascertained from a survey of the established order of the universe, an analysis of the powers of our moral constitution, or by divine revelation. If we are only satisfied that the voice which speaks is the voice of God, we are bound to listen and obey, whatever be the medium through which it reaches us.

#### *Different Forms of Obedience to the Law of God.*

369. This obedience has reference to the *commands* which God enjoins ; to the *truths* which he reveals ; and to the *dispensations* which he appoints. In the first case, he is to obey or execute ; in the second, to believe ; in the third, to submit.

370. *To render our obedience to his commands acceptable—*

(1.) It must be intended, voluntary, affectionate.

(2.) It must proceed from a deep and practical sense of God's authority over us.

(3.) We must have respect, in our obedience, to all God's commandments. The willful violation of one of them is the virtual violation of the principle upon which

they are all founded, and a dishonor to the authority by which they are all enacted.

371. It appears to be the *duty of all men to believe the doctrine which God reveals* as his truth, from the following considerations:—

(1.) *God commands all men to believe* the doctrine of divine revelation. It is the duty of man to obey *all* God's commands.

(2.) God is not more worthy of our *love* on account of his perfect moral excellence, than he is, on the same ground, of our *confidence* in all that he reveals. If, then, it is our duty to love him supremely, it is our duty to believe him implicitly.

(3.) That *man is accountable for his belief*, and is physically capable of rendering this act of obedience to God, is implied in the greater part of the intercourse of life. Is it not daily taken for granted, in the transactions of human life, that man is bound to form his judgments according to truth; that is, that as a being possessed of understanding and will, he is accountable to God for the use which he makes of these faculties in the opinions which he entertains?

(4.) As we are in no case required to believe beyond the just weight of evidence, so are we capable, in every case in which our faith is required, of weighing the sufficiency of evidence—more especially of weighing that varied and ample testimony which attests divine revelation.

(5.) The mind, in believing or disbelieving, is very much influenced by the state of the heart; and we are certainly accountable for the dispositions we entertain, and for the influence we allow them to exert upon our belief.

(6.) Faith, as an act of the human mind, is represented throughout the Scriptures as in a high degree virtuous and praiseworthy, while unbelief in the testimony of God is denounced as extremely criminal. Faith is there set forth as an act of obedience—as the confidence of the heart given to God—as a principle which is essential to the exercise of true virtue—as a principle which controls and regulates the affections and desires, and gives to what is yet future and unseen the reality of what is present and observed.

372. *Obedience, considered as an act of cordial submis-*

*sion*, consists, not in a submission to evils, but to the wise and gracious will of God in their appointment. We may, very consistently with the most dutiful acquiescence, have a lively sense of the severity of the afflictions which we are called to endure; and it is not improper in us to wish, and to use all lawful methods to escape them. Indifference to them, were this possible, is incompatible with the exercise of submission, and, considered as expressions of the will of God, indifference to afflictions is highly unbecoming and sinful. In the exercise of a proper submission, the understanding approves of the dispensations of God as holy, wise, and good.

The *duty of submission* is apparent from God's perfect right to dispose of us and ours; from his rectitude and his love.

[Dewar, vol. ii. pp. 126-144.]

373. In the exercise of love, we are further led to make God alone the object of our ADORATION AND WORSHIP; and to acknowledge him as our God, and give Him the glory due unto him, to the entire exclusion of whatever might claim the place and the honor of Deity.

This expression of love to God is considered in the exposition of the First Commandment.

374. This law concerning love to God is justly called the *First and great Commandment*, for various reasons: (1.) because He who is the object of it is the greatest and best of all beings, and therefore the duties owing to Him must have the precedence and the preëminence over every other; (2.) because it is the grand leading principle of right conduct, the original source and fountain from which all Christian graces flow, from whence the living waters of religion take their rise, and branch out into all the various duties of human life; because (3.) it is, when fervent and sincere, the grand master-spring of human conduct, the only motive sufficiently powerful to subdue our strongest passions, to carry us triumphantly through the severest trials, and render us superior to the most formidable temptations.

375. *Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself*, is the revealed law of duty toward our neighbor.

365. What definitions of love to God have been given by good writers?

366. What exposition may be given of the nature of love to God when compared with love to other beings?

367. What particulars are stated in the law, as to the degree and extent of the affection thus defined?

368. What is the most natural and constant expression of love to God?

369. What are the different forms of obedience to the law of God?

370. What is required, to render our obedience to his commands acceptable?

371. How does it appear to be the duty of all men to believe the doctrines which God reveals as his truth?

372. What is the nature of obedience to God, considered as an act of cordial submission?

373. What other prominent expression of love to God is included in the definitions given of that affection?

374. Why is this law concerning our love to God denominated the "first and the great commandment?"

375. What is the revealed law of duty toward our neighbor?

## SECTION II.—LOVE TO OUR NEIGHBOR.

376. THE term *neighbor* denotes, in the Scriptures, not only any person who may live near us, but every man with whom we have any concern; every one who stands in need of our kindness, and to whom we are able to extend it; any one from whom we receive a kindness, including, therefore, not only our relations, friends, and countrymen, but even our enemies, as appears from the parable of the Good Samaritan.

The precept therefore requires us, *generally*, to love our *fellow-creatures* as we do ourselves.

[Matt. v. 43; Mark xii. 31; Luke x. 27-37.]

377. *To love our neighbor*, is to bear him good-will; and this of course will dispose us to think favorably of him and behave properly to him, in the matter, particularly, of promoting his happiness.

*To love him as we love ourselves*, is to have not only a real, but a strong and active good-will toward him; with a tenderness for his interests duly proportioned to that which we naturally feel for our own. Such a temper would most powerfully restrain us from everything wrong, and prompt us to everything right; and therefore is the *fulfilling of the law*, so far as it relates to our mutual behavior. It would prompt us to do all we can for the happiness of each other.

Love transforms itself into the exercise of every relative duty on the simple view of the different circumstances of the persons concerned.

Thus: love, with regard to a superior, becomes honor and respect, and shows itself in a cheerful obedience and a willing submission to the rightful commands of author-



ity; love, with respect to our equals, is friendship and benevolence; toward inferiors, it is courtesy and condescension; if it regards the happy and prosperous, it is joy and pleasure, which envy cannot corrupt; if it looks toward the miserable, it is pity and compassion—it is a tenderness which will discover itself in all the acts of mercy and humanity. [See Chalmers' Works, vol. ii. p. 95.]

378. *The only love that may and should be without measure, and without comparison* with any other as its standard, is the love of which the infinite God is himself the object. That is love “with all the heart, with all the soul, with all the strength, and with all the mind,” because here all our capacities of intellect and of feeling may be expanded to their full stretch of enlargement, without the possibility of excess. *All other love must be measured and limited.*

379. (1.) It is implied in this precept that we do, and should love ourselves. There is a degree of self-love which is corrupt and the root of the greatest sins; but there is also a degree of self-love which is reasonable, and the rule of the greatest social duty. We must love ourselves, that is, have a due regard to the dignity of our own natures, and a due concern for the welfare of our own minds and bodies.

(2.) The precept under consideration may be understood as requiring only that we have the same kind of affection to our fellow-creatures, as to ourselves; that, as every man has the principle of self-love, which disposes him to avoid misery, and to consult his own happiness, so we should cultivate the affection of good-will to our neighbor, which is also implanted in us. This at least must be commanded; and this will not only prevent our being injurious to him, but will also put us upon promoting his good. It would likewise hinder men from forming so strong a notion of private good, exclusive of the good of others, as we commonly do.

*Inordinate* self-love is the great source of injustice, and it prevails universally. Who is not very liable to prefer his own interest, his own pleasure, his own honor, to that of other men?

(3.) The precept before us may be understood to require, that we love our neighbor in some certain *proportion*, or other, *according as* we love ourselves. And in-

deed a man's character cannot be determined by the love he bears to his neighbor, considered absolutely; but *the proportion which this bears to self-love*, whether it be attended to or not, is the chief thing which forms the character and influences the actions. The proportionate strength of the principle of good-will, and the principle of self-love in any man will determine his character and conduct as a benevolent or a selfish man. Love of our neighbor then must bear some due proportion to self-love, and to be virtuous, it must consist in the *due proportion*.

Both our nature and condition require, that each particular man should make particular provision for himself; and the inquiry, what proportion benevolence should bear to self-love, when brought down to practice, will be, what is a competent care and provision for ourselves. Each man must determine this for himself: the proportion is real; a competent provision has a definite limit, and that cannot be all which we can possibly get and keep within our grasp without legal injustice. In determining this question, on a moral ground, it may be said, that supposing persons do not neglect what they really owe to themselves, the more of their care, and thought, and fortune they employ in doing good to their fellow-creatures, the nearer they come up to the law of perfection, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself."

(4.) If the words *as thyself*, were even to be understood of an equality of affection, it would not be attended with those consequences which perhaps may be thought to follow from it.

Suppose a person to have the same settled regard to others as to himself; that in every deliberate scheme or pursuit he took their interest into the account in the same degree as his own, so far as an equality of affection would produce this: yet he would in fact, and ought to be, much more taken up and employed about himself and his own concerns, than about others and their interests. For, beside the one common affection toward himself and his neighbor, he would have several other particular affections, passions, appetites, which he could not possibly feel in common both for himself and others. Now these sensations themselves very much employ us, and have perhaps as great influence as self-love.

There are moral considerations also requiring more attention to our own happiness than that of others ; for we are in a particular manner intrusted with ourselves ; and therefore care of our own interests, as well as of our conduct, particularly belongs to us. To this may be added, that moral obligations extend no further than to natural possibilities. Now we have a perception of our own interests, like the consciousness of our own existence, which we always carry about with us ; and which, in its continuation, kind, and degree, seems impossible to be felt in respect to the interests of others.

From all these things it fully appears, that though we were to love our neighbor in the same degree as we love ourselves, so far as this is possible, yet the care of ourselves, of the individual, would not be neglected : the apprehended danger of which seems to be the grand objection against understanding the precept in its strict sense.

(5.) On the whole the precept under review may only instruct us to love our neighbor as really and truly as we love ourselves ; and sometimes it is made the duty of men to expend their strength and even lose their lives in the service of other men. Our self-love rightfully prompts us to seek our own happiness as far as is consistent with the duties we owe to God and to men. Our social love should in the same manner prompt us to seek the happiness of our neighbor as far as is consistent with the duty we owe to God and to ourselves.

Beside, it is not in our power to measure off our love to each individual, and to ourselves, so as to make them exactly equal ; and beside, by this rule, it would be our duty to love everybody in the same degree, whereas some are worthy of more love than others.

The precept must mean, therefore, that we are not to be exclusively devoted to our own interests ; this would be not self-love, properly speaking, but selfishness ; and it means that the interest of other men is to be in a high degree regarded, as well as our own, in all our dealings with them.

[Bishop Butler.]

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376. What person is meant by the term neighbor ?

377. What is the nature, and the measure, of the love we are required to entertain toward our fellow men ?

378. In regard to the measure, or degree of love legislated upon in these two great laws concerning God and our neighbor, what is especially worthy to be observed ?

379. Does the law of love to our neighbor require that we shall love him as much as we love ourselves ; and if this be its meaning, is not the precept impracticable ? Self-love is a principle implanted in our breasts by the Creator himself, and though social love is also another affection which He has given us, yet there is no comparison between the strength of the two principles ; and no man can, or does love all mankind as well as he does himself. With reference to these points, what answer should be returned ?

### SECTION III.—THE CHRISTIAN LAW OF RECIPROCITY.

380. THIS law is set forth in the following terms :  
*"All things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, even so do ye unto them."*

This is a *reasonable, equitable, and practicable rule* ; for when we treat our neighbor exactly as we would expect and hope to be treated by him in the same circumstances, we give a clear and decisive proof that we love him *as ourselves*.

This rule is *easy to be remembered* as well as to be understood, and it is *applicable to a thousand cases* ; in this manner : Put yourself in the place of your neighbor. Imagine yourself to be in all respects in his condition, and him to be in yours ; and then ask yourself, How should I be likely to judge ? How much should I be disposed to claim ?

In doing this, we should enter into a variety of considerations. We should imagine ourselves, for instance, to have been educated under the same prejudices with our neighbor ; to be under his temptations, subject to his natural infirmities, possessed of no more than his share of information, and accustomed to dwell in his circle of friends and acquaintance. We should imagine ourselves pressed by the same want, which perhaps he feels ; or tempted by the same false friends, by whom he may possibly be deceived ; we should fancy ourselves in his situation, altogether, and not in part only.

#### *The Golden Rule applied to various Classes of Persons.*

381. (1.) If *men in power* were often to place themselves in the situation of those whom they govern, how great would be the advantage to the latter. How criminal would that ambition then appear of which the object is, to make the ruler great and renowned at the expense of the happiness of the people. And if *the people* would



consider the temptations, as well as difficulties, which rulers experience ; if they would reflect how hard it is to please the many, and how impossible to please all ; how provoking is a spirit of insubordination and discontent, and how strong an incentive to new severities ; surely they would have more candor in judging their superiors, as well as more acquiescence and submission.

(2.) If *masters* would put themselves in the place of their servants, and would contemplate the trials of that more low and dependent state : and if *servants* would ask themselves, what they, if they were masters, would be likely to require of a servant ; if they would reflect how blamable would seem to them, if they were masters, either the insolence, or the unfaithfulness, or the duplicity, or the sloth, or even the forgetfulness of a servant : surely, then, each would be disposed to a more candid interpretation of the other's conduct, and to a stricter fulfillment of his own duty.

(3.) So also if *parents and teachers* would imagine themselves in the place of the children who are subject to them ; if, instead of measuring the faults of every child by the degree of inconvenience brought upon themselves, they would divest themselves of this selfishness, and would make that allowance for the ignorance and heedlessness of youth, which they themselves would think reasonable, if they were in the place of the children ; how different would be the judgment, respecting many of the errors of youth ; and how much milder often would be the punishment. And if *children* could be persuaded to reflect how much pain a parent feels in seeing the stubbornness and disobedience, or the inattention and ingratitude, of his offspring ; and how much pleasure in witnessing the contrary disposition ; then children would learn to be more attentive and obedient.

(4.) If the *buyer* and the *seller* would put themselves in the place of each other ; then the fraud and iniquity of trade would cease.

(5.) If all those who are disposed to quarrel with their neighbors, if all the complaining, and the censorious, and the prejudiced, would be careful to put themselves in the place of the party whom they blame, before they allow themselves to utter anything to his prejudice ; how would peace and harmony be promoted ! How extensive

is this precept of Christ, and how favorable to the happiness of the world !

382. The *philosophy of the rule*, thus illustrated, is worthy of notice. Behaving properly depends on judging truly ; and that, in cases of any doubt, depends on hearing with due attention both sides. To our own side we never fail of attending : the rule therefore is, give the other side the same attention by supposing it your own ; and after considering carefully and fairly, what, if it were indeed your own, you should not only desire (for desires may be unreasonable), but think you had an equitable claim to, and well-grounded expectation from the other party, that do in regard to him. Would we but honestly take this method, our mistakes would be so exceedingly few, and slight, and innocent, that the Great Teacher might well add, "For this is the Law and the Prophets ;" by which he may be understood to say, that this precept is an abstract of all that had been prescribed by the law and the prophets respecting our duty to man ; that all they delivered on the subject is reducible to this, so that, were their writings lost, this summary might be expanded into all they uttered.

In the application of this rule, to make it a reasonable and useful one, reason must be exercised, and a regard observed to what is morally right, as well as agreeable. A selfish man may desire to have all his wishes gratified together. Does this lay him under obligation to gratify all the wishes of others ? that would be to forget that the wishes of others, and their general state of mind may be as far wrong as his own. A wrong wish in himself can never oblige him to fulfill a wrong wish in another.

True it is, however, that, in proportion as a man's desires for himself are large and extravagant, he aggravates his condemnation, if he applies a stinted and penurious measure to the kindness or justice of his dealings with other men. "With what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again."

[Thornton ; Wardlaw ; Sir Matthew Hale.]

380. What rule of action was delivered by our Savior, that may be regarded as of nearly the same import with the law now under consideration ?

381. How may this golden rule, delivered by our Savior, be applied to various classes of persons ?

382. What is the philosophy of the rule, thus illustrated ?

## SECTION IV.—LOVE TO OUR NEIGHBOR DISTINGUISHED FROM A SPURIOUS PHILANTHROPY.

383. THERE is a school of modern infidels who resolve all virtue into a chimerical passion for the public good ; and the characteristic feature of their system is, to build up general benevolence on the destruction of individual tenderness.

In opposition to this system, reason and revelation unite in teaching us, that in the development of the passions, we must advance from the private to public affections, and that extended benevolence is the last and most perfect fruit of individual regards.

While we have represented love to our neighbor as consisting in universal benevolence, it must be added, that instead of satisfying itself with mere speculations on the desirableness of the well-being of the whole, or with mere good wishes for the happiness of mankind in general, it will put forth its energies for those who are within its reach ; it would, if it could, touch the extreme parts ; but as this cannot be done, it will exert a beneficial influence on those who are near.

The persons with whom we daily converse and act, are those on whom our benevolence is first and most constantly to express itself, because these are the parts of the whole which give us the opportunity of calling into exercise our universal philanthropy. But to them it is not to be confined either in feeling or action ; for, as we have opportunity, we are to do good to all men, and send abroad our beneficent regards to the great family of man.

[James's Christian Charity ; Dr. Dewar has a fine article on this subject, *Mor. Phil.* vol. ii. pp. 321-327.]

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383. How is active and universal benevolence distinguished from a spurious philanthropy ?

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## CHAPTER II.

## THE APOSTLE PAUL'S DESCRIPTION OF LOVE TO OUR NEIGHBOR.

384. REFERENCE is here made particularly to that description of it which is found in the thirteenth chapter of his first Epistle to the Corinthians.

By a beautiful personification, the apostle has described this grace under the figure of an interesting female, who, like an angel of light, lifts her cherubic form amid the children of men; shedding, as she passes along, a healing influence on the wounds of society, hushing the notes of discord, driving before her the spirits of mischief, bringing the graces in her train, and converting earth into a resemblance of heaven. "*Love suffereth long, and is kind; love envieth not; love vaunteth not itself; is not puffed up; doth not behave itself unseemly; seeketh not her own; is not easily provoked; thinketh no evil; rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things.*"

385. There are other manifestations or operations of love, beside those which are here specified—such, for instance, as justice, and chastity; for it is impossible to love mankind, and violate the rules of either of these duties: the specification is here restricted to those properties of love which are comprehended in the word *temper*—a subject that has been treated in the chapter on Happiness.

386. It embraces the meekness of love, the kindness of love, the contentment of love, the humility of love, the decorum of love, the disinterestedness of love, the unsuspectingness of love, the joy of love, the candor of love, and the self-denial of love.

Each of these properties will be briefly considered.

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384. What description of love to our neighbor is here referred to?

385. Are these the only operations of charity, or love?

386. What properties of temper does this description embrace?

#### SECTION I.—THE MEEKNESS OF LOVE.

*"Charity suffereth long—is not easily provoked."*

387. IN reference to the irascible passions, there are three things which love will prevent:—

(1.) *It will prevent an irritable and petulant disposition:* for, it will make us willing to think the best of those with whom we have to do; it will disarm us of that suspicion and mistrust, which make us regard everybody as intending to injure us; will cause us to find out pleas for those who have done us harm, and when this is impossible, will lead us to pity their weakness, or forgive their wickedness.



*The late Dr. Bowditch.*

An impressive illustration of these remarks may be derived from an incident in the life of the late Dr. Bowditch, of Salem, Mass., who was as eminent for his great and useful talents, as he was beloved by all who were acquainted with him.

“Dr. Bowditch had been preparing a plan of Salem, which he intended soon to publish. It had been the fruit of much labor and care. By some means or other, an individual in the town had surreptitiously got possession of it, and had the audacity to issue proposals to publish it as his own. This was too much for Dr. Bowditch to bear. He instantly went to the person, and burst out into the following strain:—‘You villain, how dare you do this? If you proceed any further in this business, I will prosecute you to the utmost extent of the law.’ The poor fellow cowered before the storm of his indignation, and was silent—for the doctor’s wrath was terrible. Dr. Bowditch went home and slept on it; and, the next day, hearing from some authentic source that the man was extremely poor, and had probably been driven by the necessities of his family to commit this audacious plagiarism, his feelings were touched, his heart melted away like wax. He went to him again, and said, ‘Sir, you did very wrong, and you know it, to appropriate to your own use and benefit, the fruit of my labors. But I understand you are poor, and have a family to support. I feel for you, and will help you. That plan is unfinished, and contains errors that would have disgraced you and me, had it been published in the state in which you found it. I’ll tell you what I will do. I will finish the plan; I will correct the errors; and then you shall publish it for your own benefit, and I will head the subscription list with my name.’”

What a noble triumph of Christianity over passion, even where the provocation was peculiarly strong; what a triumph of benevolence over even his own just claims! How much greater did he show himself, as a man, than an Alexander or a Cæsar, who, while they triumphed over others, were incompetent to govern their own lawless passions!

(2.) *Love prevents immoderate anger*; for it cannot allow

itself to indulge those tempers which are unfriendly to the happiness of mankind.

(3.) *Love will of course prevent revenge.* The volume of history is stained, from the beginning to the end, with the blood which has been shed by the demon of revenge.

388. Too generally, the application of the term revenge is confined to the grosser, more mischievous, and more violent expressions of wrath, such as maiming the person, openly slandering the reputation, or wantonly injuring the property of others.

But there are a thousand *petty acts of spite and ill-will, by which a revengeful spirit may operate.* If we refuse to speak to another by whom we have been injured, and pass him with silent or manifest scorn; if we take delight in talking of his failings, and in lowering him in the opinion of others; if we show ill-will to his children or relations on his account; all this is as truly the acting of revenge, as if we proceeded to inflict bodily injury. The spirit of revenge simply means doing evil for evil, and taking pleasure in doing so.

389. We are not, however, forbidden to defend our persons, our property, our reputation, from the aggressions of lawless mischief. If an assassin attempt to maim or murder me, I am allowed to resist the attack, even to extremity; for this is not avenging an evil, but an effort to prevent one.

390. *If our character in society is aspersed,* we must endeavor, by peaceful means, to gain an apology and exculpation; and if this cannot be obtained, we are authorized to appeal to the law: for, if calumny were not punished, society could not exist.

To seek the protection of the law, without, at the same time, indulging in malice, this is self-defense, and the defense of society. No person, however, should in any case of difficulty resort to the tribunal of public justice till every other method of adjustment has failed.

391. The revealed law is decidedly opposed to *Christians going to law with each other*, as we learn from 1 Cor. chap. vi. In cases of difference about property or character, professed Christians are thus required by the divine law, to settle all their disputes by the mediation of their own brethren; and if either party decline such arbitration, he must be accountable for all the scandal thrown

on the Christian profession by the legal measures to which the other may find it necessary to resort for the protection of his rights. Whatever award is made, in the case of private arbitration, both parties should abide by it; nor must the individual against whom the decision is made, feel any ill-will, or cherish any revenge toward his successful competitor.

392. The law of love requires that innumerable *minor offenses* should be passed over without being noticed, or suffered to disturb our peace of mind. And those which we find it necessary to have explained, require the utmost caution and delicacy. In these cases, love will lead us to the offender in the spirit of meekness, to ask, not to demand an explanation of the injurious treatment. In a great majority of cases, this line of conduct would stifle the animosity while it is yet a spark.

*Noble Revenge.*

“When I was a small boy, there was a black boy in the neighborhood, by the name of ‘Jim Dick.’ Myself and a number of my playfellows were one evening collected together at our usual sports, and began tormenting the poor colored boy, by calling him ‘blackamoor,’ ‘nigger,’ and other degrading epithets; the poor fellow appeared excessively grieved at our conduct, and soon left us. We soon after made an appointment to go a-skating in the neighborhood, and on the day of the appointment I had the misfortune to break my skates, and I could not go without borrowing a pair of Jim Dick. I went to him and asked him for them. ‘O yes, John, you may have them and welcome,’ was his answer. When I went to return them, I found Jim sitting by the fire in the kitchen, reading the Bible. I told him I had returned his skates, and was under great obligations to him for his kindness. He looked at me as he took the skates, and, with tears in his eyes, said to me, ‘John, don’t never call me a blackamoor again,’ and immediately left the room. These words pierced my heart, and I burst into tears, and from that time resolved not to abuse a poor black in future.”—SOUTHEY.

387. What three things will love prevent, in reference to the irascible passions here alluded to?

388. What important mistake needs correcting with regard to revenge?

389. According to this view, are we not forbidden to defend our persons, our property, and our reputation, from the aggressions of lawless mischief?

390. If our character in society be aspersed, what course does love allow or suggest?

391. As it respects the propriety of Christians going to law with each other, what is the testimony of the revealed law?

392. What does the law of love require in regard to minor offenses?

## SECTION II.—ON THE KINDNESS OF LOVE.

*"Charity is kind."*

393. KINDNESS is a disposition to please—an anxiety, manifested by our conduct, to promote the comfort of our species. Pity commiserates their sorrows, mercy relieves their wants and mitigates their woes; but kindness is a general attention to their comfort.

394. (1.) It expresses itself in *words* that are calculated to please. As not only our words, but the tones of our voice, are indicative of our thoughts and feelings, it is of consequence for us to be careful, both in *what* we say, and *how* we say it. Half of the quarrels which disturb the peace of society arise from unkind words, and not a few from unkind *tones*.

(2.) Kindness extends itself to *actions*. It is anxious not to give offense by anything which it *does*: it is most tender in reference to the feelings of its object, and would not, unnecessarily, crush the wing of an insect, much less inflict a wound upon a rational mind.

There are persons who, in a spirit of selfish independence, care not whom they please, or whom they offend; but love is as anxious not to offend, as it is solicitous about its own gratification: its neighbor's comfort is as dear to it as its own: it calculates, deliberates, weighs the tendency of actions; and when, by incaution, or pure misfortune, it has occasioned distress, it hastens, by every practicable means, to heal the wound.

Kindness *not only abstains from actual injury, but it is active in conferring benefits*; watches for an opportunity to please; is ever ready to afford its assistance when appealed to; and is not satisfied, unless it can do something to increase the general stock of comfort. It accommodates itself to men's habits, partialities, or prejudices; adapts itself, in things indifferent and lawful, to their modes of acting, and does not wantonly oppose their predilections, when such resistance would occasion them distress.



It extends, of course, to *little things*, as well as to great ones. The daily, and almost hourly reciprocity of little acts of good or ill will, which we have an opportunity of performing, goes a great way to the making up of good or bad neighborhood.

Kindness is *universal in its objects*. There is a kindness merely of barter and not of charity, being exercised only toward those from whom we expect a correspondent return: but love is universal, it is ever ready to do a kind office for any one that either solicits, or needs its assistance. It has a kind word, look, and act for everybody. Nor are its enemies denied the assistance of its efforts.

*What a fascinating character is the man of distinguished kindness!* he is invested with indescribable loveliness. While he lives, every man is his admirer; and when he dies, every man is his mourner: while he is on earth, his name has a home in every heart; and when he is gone, he has a monument in every memory.

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393. What is meant by kindness?

394. In what manner does kindness act?

### SECTION III.—THE CONTENTMENT OF LOVE.

*"Charity envieth not."*

395. ENVY is that passion which causes us to feel uneasiness at the sight of another's possessions or happiness, and which makes us dislike him on that account. Of all the base passions, this is the basest. It is the very opposite of love.

396. It stands directly opposed to the nature of God, whose love delights in excellence and in happiness.

It is an incessant quarrel with Providence—with the wisdom, equity, and goodness of the divine administration.

It is a parent crime, and its progeny are as mischievous and deformed as itself: for malice, hatred, falsehood, slander, are its ordinary brood; and not unfrequently murder.

397. Contentment with such things as we have is the opposite of envy; and is the secret of happiness, whether we have much or little. The contented man can borrow the joys of others when he has none, or few, of his own; and, from the wilderness of his own situation, enjoy the beautiful prospect of his friend's domain.

395. What is envy ?

396. Whence arises the hatefulness of envy ?

397. What is the opposite of envy ?

#### SECTION IV.—THE HUMILITY OF LOVE.

*"Is not puffed up—vaunteth not itself."*

398. PRIDE signifies such an exalted idea of ourselves as leads to a contempt of others, and makes us anxious for applause. It is therefore opposed to love.

399. Wealth, talents, learning, ecclesiastical connections, superior light on the subject of revealed truth, religious gifts, deep religious experience, zeal, whether in the cause of humanity or of piety, are the *usual grounds of pride*.

400. Love is opposed to *vanity* as well as pride. Love "vaunteth not itself." It does not boast of, nor ostentatiously display its possessions, acquirements, or operations. There is a great disposition among men to boast of their property, or learning, or connections, or influence, or usefulness.

401. Love is a desire to promote the happiness of those around us ; but proud and vain persons adopt a course which materially impairs this happiness. They generally excite disgust, frequently offer insult, and sometimes inflict pain. Their object is to impress you with a degrading sense of inferiority, and thus to wound and mortify your feelings.

Hence love must be attended by humility ; by which is meant, not meanness or sycophancy, but a disposition to think lowly of our attainments, a tendency to dwell upon our defects rather than our excellences ; an apprehension of our own inferiority compared with what we ought to be, and what we might be. It is always attended with that modest deportment, which neither boasts of itself, nor seeks to depreciate any one.

Divine revelation is the only system which, either in ancient or in modern times, assigns to humility the rank of a virtue, or makes provision for its production and due cultivation.

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398. What is pride ?

399. What are the usual grounds of pride ?

400. Is not love opposed to vanity as well as to pride ?

401. How does love operate to destroy pride and vanity ?

## SECTION V.—THE DECORUM OF LOVE.

*“Doth not behave itself unseemly.”*

402. LOVE leads a man to study his place in society and to keep it ; and prevents all those deviations which, by disarranging the order, disturb the comfort of society.

403. Love suggests a *compendious rule*, with reference to decorum. “A station for every person, and every person in his station : a time for every proper thing, and every such thing in its time : a manner for everything, and everything in its manner.”

404. The distinctions existing in society involve a certain line of conduct that may be termed “becomingness.” Among these we shall consider the distinctions of male and female, of parents or guardians, and children, of superiors and inferiors, of age and youth.

405. With respect to the *distinction of male and female*, the decorum of love requires the following things :—

On the part of the man, if he be single, all trifling with the affections, all familiarity with the person, all taking advantage of the weakness of the other sex, is explicitly forbidden by the law of love ; as is all neglect, oppression, and unkindness toward his wife, if he be married.

It is unseemly on the part of a husband, to become either the slave, or the tyrant of his wife ; it is disgusting to see him abandoning the society of his wife for the company of other females, and flirting, though perhaps with no criminal intention, with either single or married women.

On the other hand, it is equally unseemly in unmarried women to indulge in a bold obtrusiveness of manner, a clamorous and monopolizing strain of conversation, an evident attempt to attract the attention of the other sex. And women, if married, should be stayers at home, and not gossips abroad ; should look well to the ways of their household, and preside over its affairs in the meekness of wisdom : for domestic indolence and neglect is, in a wife and mother, most unseemly ; nor is it less offensive to see the female head of a family usurping the seat of government, and reducing her husband to the rank of mere prime minister to the queen. Women never act more unseemly than when they become busy, meddling partisans, either in politics or in church affairs.

406. The law of love requires the following things of *parents, guardians, and children* :—

Under the influence of love, fathers will neither be tyrannical nor too indulgent; and becomingness on the part of children requires the most prompt and willing obedience, the most genuine and manifest affection, the most respectful and humble demeanor toward parents, with the most anxious and ingenious endeavors to promote their happiness.

It is excessively unbecoming to hear children of any age, however matured or advanced, exposing, perhaps ridiculing their parents' infirmities, treating their opinions with scorn, and reproving or upbraiding them to their face. It should be recollected by all young people, that whatever may be the character of a parent,

“A mother is a mother still,  
The holiest thing alive.”

407. In the intercourse of *superiors and inferiors*, dignified affability is the becomingness of superiority, which, while it does not remove the line of distinction, does not render it painfully visible. Love will make us cautious not to wound the feelings of others by talking to them of our superiority, or by making them in any way feel it.

Incivility or rudeness, on the other hand, manifested by the poor to the rich, by servants to masters, by students to their instructors, by the illiterate to the well informed, is unfriendly to the peace and good order of society, and, therefore, contrary to Christian charity.

408. With regard to the line of conduct proper to *age* and *youth* respectively, levity, puerility, and folly are among the qualities which would be indecorous in the former; while obtrusiveness, forwardness, loquaciousness, and pertinacity would be unseemly in the latter. Age, to be lovely, should treat youth with kindness and forbearance; while youth should treat age with reverence, respect, and deference.

Anything unbecoming is sure to give offense, and to produce discomfort. Men are united in society like the organs and limbs in the human body; and no one, in either case, can be put out of its place without producing uneasiness in the rest. The object of love is to keep all in their proper places, and thus to promote the well-being of the whole.



409. It may be remarked, that love does not allow a *professed Christian* to act unworthy of his profession as a disciple of Christ ; for such conduct would be unseemly, and cause pain in every right-minded beholder. It would also excite a prejudice against religion, and thus prevent worldly men from embracing it, and thereby securing everlasting happiness. It also tends to awaken a prejudice against Christians generally, and thus to injure their happiness and usefulness.

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402. What has love to do with decorum ; and what does this term imply ?

403. What compendious rule does love suggest or sanction, with reference to decorum ?

404. What are some of the distinctions of society which involve a certain line of conduct that may be termed "becomingness?"

405. What line of conduct befits the distinction of male and female ?

406. What conduct does love dictate as suitable to parents or guardians, and children ?

407. What conduct does love dictate as suitable to superiors and inferiors ?

408. What is a suitable or becoming line of conduct on the part of age and youth respectively ?

409. What conduct is unseemly in a professed Christian ?

#### SECTION VI.—THE DISINTERESTEDNESS OF LOVE.

*"Seeketh not her own."*

410. IN opposition to the claim of disinterested love, it has been argued, that we take delight in the happiness of others, because their happiness increases our own.

In confutation, however, of this argument, it may be observed, that the circumstance of our happiness being increased by promoting theirs, is itself a convincing proof of the existence and exercise of an antecedent good-will toward them. Our felicity is raised by theirs. Why ? Because we love them. Why am I made unhappy by the sight of another's woe ? Because I have a good-will to the subject of distress.

411. *Selfishness and self-love are not to be confounded.* By selfishness, we mean such a regard to our own things, as is inconsistent with, and destructive of, a right regard to the things of others ; whereas by self-love, we mean nothing more than that attention to our own affairs which we owe to ourselves as part of universal being.

Selfishness means the neglect or injury of others, in order to concentrate our views, and desires, and pursuits, in ourselves ; while self-love means only that proper and

due regard to our own interests which we may pay, without the neglect or injury of our neighbor.

412. In regard to the *tendencies of selfishness*, its worst feature is, that it leads men to seek their own interests in *opposition* to the interests of others.

Sometimes it causes its subjects only to *neglect* the things of others. They do not oppress, or injure, calumniate, or despoil; but they are so engrossed by self-interest, as to be utterly regardless of the miseries or comfort of which they cannot avoid being the spectators. Their highest boast and attainment in virtue is, to wrong none. To do good, enters not into their idea of morality.

A man is guilty of selfishness, if he seeks his own things *out of all proportion* to the regard he pays to the things of others.

Selfishness sometimes seeks its own, *under the pretense and profession of promoting the happiness of others*. Large sacrifices of wealth, and time, and ease, and feeling, are often readily made for applause.

413. In regard to the following classes of objects, *selfishness is exhibited*:—

(1.) *Property*. It shows itself in an anxiety to obtain wealth, and an unwillingness to part with it; a disposition greedy as the sea, and barren as the shore.

(2.) In regard to *Opinion*. It is selfishness that leads any one to wish that *he* should dictate to the rest; that *his* opinion should be law; and *his* wishes be consulted and obeyed. This is not love. Love gives up her own, where conscience does not interfere to forbid it, and meekly and quietly resigns its wishes to increase peace and promote harmony; its object is the public good.

(3.) Selfishness is often displayed *in habits of general conduct which are exceedingly annoying to others*. There is a regard to their appetite, ease, or humor, which many indulge to the annoyance of their neighbors, and which they indulge against the remonstrances of those who suffer. That regard to our comfort which leads us to neglect or sacrifice the felicity of another, let the object to which it is directed be what it may, is the selfishness which love would oppose and destroy.

414. Under false names and disguises, selfishness sometimes conceals itself, and then escapes much of the obloquy it deserves. The plea of frugality, of a just

regard to the claims of a family; the pretension of acting for the glory of God, and for the public good—the pretext of a regard for the truth—all these are often made the cover of unmixed selfishness.

415. Selfishness is a great evil. It is opposite to divine benevolence, and contrary to the temper of our Lord Jesus Christ, “who pleased not himself.” It is the source of innumerable vices. It is a rejection of all the claims, and an opposition to all the ends and interests, of society.

This disposition defeats its own end. There is great joy in love; and, of course, in proportion as we extend the range and multiply the objects of our love, we extend the range and multiply the objects of our happiness. He that loves only himself, has only one joy; he that loves his neighbor, has many.

Rouse to some work of high and holy love,  
And thou an angel's happiness shalt know,—  
Shalt bless the earth while in the world above;  
The good begun by thee shall onward flow  
In many a branching stream, and wider grow;  
The seed that, in these few and fleeting hours,  
Thy hands unsparing and unwearied sow,  
Shall deck thy grave with amaranthine flowers,  
And yield thee fruits divine in heaven's immortal bowers.

WILCOX.

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410. What objection has been made to the claim of disinterested love?  
411. How are selfishness and self-love distinguished?  
412. What are the tendencies of selfishness?  
413. In regard to what subjects is selfishness indulged?  
414. Under what false names and disguises does selfishness sometimes conceal itself, and escape much of the obloquy it deserves?  
415. In what consists the evil of selfishness?

#### SECTION VII.—THE UNSUSPICIOUSNESS OF LOVE.

“*Thinketh no evil.*”

416. VARIOUS senses may be attached to this definition of love.

(1.) It does not *desire* evil. There are many who maintain outwardly a tolerably respectable character, but are still far too busy in devising evil.

*Desire of gain* may lead them to devise means by which they may injure a more prosperous neighbor, a more thriving tradesman than themselves.

Or, they may be moved by *envy* to devise means for

blasting the reputation of a popular rival, or at least to render him less a favorite with the public.

A love of sporting with the fears of the timid and the weak has led some to delight in finding means for exciting their alarms: they do not desire to inflict pain so much from a malignity of disposition, as from a wanton pleasure in raising a joke.

*It is dreadful that the human intellect should ever be employed in devising evil:* and yet, passing by the cabinets of statesmen, where hostile and unprincipled aggressions are so often planned against a weaker state; and the closets of monarchs, where schemes which are to entail the horrors of war upon millions are contrived without compunction; and the slave-merchant's cabin, where the details are arranged for burning peaceful villages, and dragging into captivity their unoffending inhabitants; and the robber's cave, the murderer's chamber, and the swindler's retreat: passing by these haunts of demons, where the master-spirits of mischief hold their conclave, and digest their dark and horrid purposes, what a prodigious movement of mind is perpetually going on among the subalterns!

To all these persons, and to all this their conduct, love is diametrically opposed. It thinketh not evil, but good; it deviseth to communicate pleasure, not pain. It would make the miserable happy, and the happy still happier. It deviseth good upon its bed, and riseth in the morning to fulfill the plans of mercy with which it had sunk to rest.

(2.) But probably Paul meant that it does not *impute* evil. It is not in haste to criminate, as if it were its delight to prove men wicked, but is willing to impute a good motive to men's actions, till a bad one is clearly demonstrated.

We are too forward to suspect the piety of our neighbors; and also to impute bad motives to particular actions.

When an action is good, it is too often ascribed to some sinister motive: when of a doubtful nature, we are too apt to lose sight of the evidence in favor of its being done with a good motive.

417. The *evil of suspiciousness* is discernible in the fact, that it disturbs the peace of society; for if men *think* evil, it is an easy step to *speak* evil, and then to *do* evil, so that the origin of many quarrels will be found in



the false impressions of a suspicious mind—the misapprehension of a censorious judgment.

But love “thinketh no evil.” She delights to speak well and think well of others: she says little or nothing, except when necessity compels her, of their bad actions. She imputes not evil so long as good is probable; she makes every allowance that truth will permit; suffers not her opinions to be formed till she has had opportunity to escape from the mist of passion.

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416. What senses may be attached to this definition of love?

417. Wherein consists the evil of suspiciousness?

#### SECTION VIII.—THE JOY OF LOVE.

*“Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth.”*

418. LOVE does not rejoice in iniquity—in that which is wrong.

Love cannot delight in *the misconduct of an enemy or a rival*; this is perhaps the precise meaning of the apostle. It cannot *tempt* him to sin, in order to gain the advantage over him, nor can it employ or encourage others to tempt him for the same purpose. Nor will love entertain a delight in seeing an enemy or a rival fall into misconduct, by other means; nor in seeing him injured in a way similar to that in which he may have injured us.

419. On the other hand, the apostle informs us that love “rejoices in the truth,” in conduct that is conformed to the precepts of revealed truth, in a virtuous and upright course. Love rejoices not in the vices, but in the virtues of others.

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418. In what does love not rejoice?

419. In what, on the other hand, does love rejoice?

#### SECTION IX.—THE CANDOR OF LOVE.

*“Beareth all things.”*

420. THE candor of love stands opposed to slander, detraction, and censoriousness.

421. *Slander* is the circulation of a *false* report, with the intention of injuring a neighbor’s reputation. Its most vicious excess is the *invention* and construction of a story which is false from beginning to end. Its next lower grade, though little inferior in criminality, is to

become the *propagator* of the tale, knowing it to be false. The next operation of slander is to *receive and spread*, without *examining* into the truth of them, false and injurious reports. Sometimes it withers the reputation of a neighbor by *rash speaking*, or vehemently affirming things which it has no reason to believe, and no motive for affirming, but the hope of exciting ill-will.

422. Slander possesses the following *attributes*:—It is *sinful*, because forbidden and denounced in every part of Scripture; *cruel*, because it is robbing our neighbor of that which is dearer to him than life; and *foolish*, because it subjects the calumniator himself to all kinds of inconvenience and trouble.

423. *Detraction*, or backbiting, closely resembles slander. A detractor's aim is the same as the slanderer's, but he avails himself of means a little different. He represents persons and things under the most disadvantageous circumstances he can, setting forth those which may make them appear guilty or ridiculous, and throwing into the shade such as are commendable. He misconstrues doubtful actions unfavorably, and throws over the very virtues of his neighbors the name of faults; calling the sober, sour; the conscientious, morose; the devout, superstitious; the frugal, sordid; the cheerful, frivolous; and the reserved, crafty.

424. It is a crime compounded of the ingredients of ill-humor, pride, selfishness, envy, malice, folly, cowardice, and falsehood.

425. *Censoriousness* is a child of the same family, but varies from the others by acting not so much in the way of *reporting* faults, as in condemning them.

It means a disposition to scrutinize men's motives, to pass sentence upon their conduct, to reproach their faults, accompanied by an unwillingness to make all reasonable allowances for their mistakes, and a tendency to the side of severity rather than leniency.

426. What is to be condemned, is, needlessly inquiring into the conduct and motives of other men; examining and arraigning them at our bar, when we stand in no relation to them that demands such scrutiny; delivering an opinion when it is not called for; pronouncing sentence with undue severity.

427. In opposition to slander, detraction, and censo-

riousness, the influence of love, in view of the conduct of others, may be embraced in the following particulars :—

(1.) *Love is a long time before it allows itself to perceive the faults of others*; while slander and detraction are quick to descry imperfections as soon as they appear in the conduct of others.

(2.) When love is obliged to admit the existence of imperfections, *it diminishes as much as possible their magnitude*, and hides them as much as it is lawful from its own notice.

(3.) It is the wish and the act of love, *to conceal from the public all the faults*, which the good of the offender, and the ends of public justice, do not require to be disclosed. There are cases, in which to conceal offenses, whatever kindness it may be to one, would be unkindness to many. As our love is to be universal as well as particular, it must never be exercised toward individuals in a way that is really opposed to the interests of the community.

There are some, on the other hand, who publish the faults of others under the hypocritical pretense of lamenting over them, and producing in others a caution against the same thing, with many expressions of pity for the offender. Such pity might be shown in a better way.

(4.) Love not only will not *originate*, but will not help to *circulate*, an evil report. When the tale comes to her, there, at least in that direction, it will stop.

428. The evils to which love stands opposed, are, *calumny*, which invents a slanderous report to injure the reputation of another; *detraction*, which magnifies a fault; *censoriousness*, which is too officious and too rigid in condemning it; *tale-bearing*, which propagates it; *curiosity*, which desires to know it; *malignity*, which takes delight in it. Of this list of vices, calumny is, of course, the worst; but a tattling disposition, though it may have little of the malignity of slander, is a servant to do its work, and a tool to perpetuate its mischief.

“ *Charity believeth all things.*”

429. Reference is here made to all things which are testified concerning our brethren; not, however, such as are testified to their disadvantage, but in their favor. How readily does a fond mother believe things reported in favor of her child, and how reluctantly does she believe

what is said to its disadvantage ! So love is exhibited in the man who believeth all things which are related to the advantage of others.

430. The strongest proof of love in the exercise of belief, is, when it leads us to believe all good reports of an *enemy* or a *rival*. Many persons can believe nothing good, but everything bad, of those whom they consider in this light.

431. Prejudice has neither eyes nor ears for good ; but is all eye and ear for evil. Its influence on the judgment is prodigious.

“ *Charity hopeth all things.* ”

432. Hope has reference here to the good which is reported to exist in our neighbors. In a report of a doubtful matter, where the evidence is apparently against an individual, love will still hope that something may yet turn up to his advantage ; it will not give full credit to present appearances, however indicative they may seem to be of evil, but hope, even against hope, for the best.

If the *action* itself cannot be defended, then love will hope that the *motive* was not bad ; that ignorance, not malice, was the cause of the transaction.

*Love does not speedily abandon an offender in despondency* ; does not immediately give him up as incorrigible, nor soon cease to employ the means necessary for his reformation ; but is willing to expect that he may yet repent and improve, however discouraging present appearances may be.

433. As reasons for believing and hoping all things for the best, we should, first, consider how common is slander, detraction, and tale-bearing, and not be hasty, therefore, in forming an opinion. We know that *every case has two aspects* ; and we know the folly of deciding till we have heard both sides.

Secondly, we are in danger of being misled in our opinion of our neighbor's conduct, by the mischievous propensity of many persons to *exaggerate* everything they relate.

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420. To what vices is the candor of love opposed ?

421. What are we to understand by slander ?

422. What are some of the attributes of slander ?

423. In what consists the crime of detraction ?

424. In what consists the criminality of detraction ?



425. How does the crime of censoriousness differ from those now described?

426. Are we to suppose that all inspection and condemnation of the conduct of others is sin; that all reproof of offenders is a violation of the law of charity?

427. In opposition to slander, detraction, and censoriousness, what is the influence of love upon us in view of the conduct of others?

428. To what evils, then, have we shown love to be opposed?

429. What things are referred to in the proposition—"Charity believeth all things?"

430. Where is seen the strongest proof and power of love, in this mode of its operation?

431. What is the nature and effect of prejudice?

432. To what does the hope spoken of above, refer, and what has love to do with it?

433. What reasons are there, which make it wise, as well as kind, to believe and hope all things for the best?

#### SECTION X.—THE SELF-DENIAL OF LOVE.

*"Endureth all things."*

434. LOVE is patient and self-denying in pursuing its design to relieve the wants, assuage the sorrows, reform the vices, and allay the animosities of those whose good it seeks. To do good, it will bear with the infirmities of the meanest, or will brave the scorn and fury of the mightiest.

435. The difficulties, the discouragements, the provocations, which love has to bear, and which it can resist, are the following:—

(1.) *Sacrifices of ease, of time, of feeling, and of property* must all be endured. If we would promote the happiness of our fellow-creatures, it must be by parting with something or other that is dear to us. If we would lay aside revenge when they have injured us, and exercise forgiveness, we must often mortify our own feelings. If we would reconcile the differences of those who are at variance, we must give up our time, and sometimes our comfort. If we would assuage their griefs, we must expend our property. If we would reform their wickedness, we must part with our ease. If we would, in short, do good of any kind, we must be willing to deny ourselves, and bear labor of body, and pain of mind. And love is willing to do this; it braces itself for labor, arms itself for conflict, prepares itself for suffering; it looks difficulties in the face, counts the cost, and heroically exclaims, "None of these things move me, so that I may diminish the evils, and promote the happiness of others."

(2.) *Misconstruction* is another thing that love endures. Love goes about doing good, notwithstanding the ignorant or the malignant perversion of its motives and actions on the part of its enemies.

(3.) *Envy* is another of the evils which love endures without being turned aside by it. To be good, and to do good, are alike the objects of envy with some persons.

(4.) *Ingratitude* is often the hard usage which love has to sustain, and which it patiently endures. Many persons do not know their benefactors, many more will not acknowledge them, and others will not reward them even with the cheap offering of thanks. These things are enough to make us sick of the world; yes, but ought not to make us weary of trying to mend it; for the more ungrateful it is, the more it needs our benevolence.

(5.) *Derision* is often employed to oppose the efforts of love by all the artillery of scorn, especially when love is directed to the advancement of religion and morality.

(6.) *Want of success*, that most discouraging consideration to activity, is not sufficient to drive it from the field; but, in the expectation of the future harvest, it continues to plough and to sow in hope.

436. As instances in which the self-denial of love has been beautifully exhibited, we may contemplate the labors and sufferings of Clarkson in the endeavor to abolish the slave-trade; those of the apostle Paul in propagating the gospel, as recorded in 2 Cor. xi.; but above all, the labors and sufferings of the living personification of love, the Son of God, in accomplishing the work of man's redemption. These are the models that we should ever endeavor to copy.

[This chapter has been drawn from John A. James's work on Christian Charity, to which reference may be made for a more full discussion of the topics embraced in it.]

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434. What is implied in the self-denial of love?

435. What are the difficulties, discouragements, and provocations, that love must encounter?

436. What instances may be mentioned, in which the self-denial of love has been conspicuously and beautifully exhibited?

## CHAPTER III.

## LOVE TO MAN VIEWED UNDER CERTAIN GENERAL RELATIONS.

437. MAN may be considered in two points of view : as possessed of a *body*, which is susceptible of agreeable or disagreeable sensations ; and, as endued with a *mind*, which is capable of endless improvement in knowledge and virtue, and which is destined to an endless existence. In both these respects, love will exert its powers in meliorating the condition, and promoting the enjoyments of mankind.

I. *Love to our Fellow-men, considered as Sensitive Beings.*

438. Man, in regard to his corporeal system, is subject to various sufferings and wants.

(1.) He stands in need of food, raiment, comfortable lodging and accommodations, light to cheer, and enable him to prosecute his employments, pure atmospheric air to invigorate his animal system, and water to cleanse and refresh him.

(2.) He is exposed to corporeal weakness, and to mental imbecility ; to pain and disease ; to the loss of one or more of the senses ; to the decrepitude of old age.

(3.) He is also exposed to the afflictions occasioned by the loss of friends and relatives ; to dejection of mind, to remorse of conscience, to doubt, despondency, and despair ; to anxieties, vexations, and troubles of various kinds.

439. Love will endeavor to supply these wants, and to assuage and relieve these sorrows.

In this respect, every one, however low his situation in life, however limited the range of his knowledge, and however contracted the sphere of his influence may be, has it in his power, in a greater or less degree, to communicate blessings to his brethren of mankind.

440. He can visit the sick bed of an afflicted neighbor ; he can supply a cup of cold water to his parched tongue ; he can wipe the sweat from his forehead ; he can smooth his pillow ; he can turn him round on his bed of languish-

ing, that he may enjoy a more comfortable repose ; and he can cheer him by those expressions of tenderness and affection, which have a tendency above all other acts of kindness to revive the downcast spirit.

441. He can assist his neighbor by his strength or by his skill, by his counsel and advice, and by taking a lively interest in his concerns. He can promote his joy by rejoicing in his prosperity and success ; by assisting him in his employment ; by rescuing him from danger ; by forgiving the injuries he may have inflicted, and by listening with patience and complacency to his sentiments, complaints, or grievances.

*The Widow's Light-house.*

The island of Rona is a small and very rocky spot of land, lying between the isle Syke and the main land of Applecross, and it is well known to mariners by the rugged and dangerous nature of its coast. There is a famous place of refuge in its southwestern extremity, called the "Muckle Harbor," of very difficult access, however, which, strange to say, is easier entered by night than during the day. At the extremity of this hyperborean solitude is the residence of a poor widow, whose lonely cottage is called the light-house, from the fact that she uniformly keeps her lamp burning in her little window at night. By keeping this light, and the entrance of the harbor *open*, a strange vessel may enter with the greatest safety.

During the silent watches of the night, the widow may be seen, like Norma of the Fitful Head, trimming her little lamp with oil, fearful that some frail bark may perish through her neglect ; and for this she receives no manner of remuneration ; it is pure and unmingled philanthropy. The poor woman's kindness does not even rest here, for she is unhappy until the benumbed and shivering mariner comes ashore to share her little board, and recruit himself at her glowing and cheerful fire, and she can seldom be prevailed upon to accept any reward. She has saved more lives than Davy's lamp, and thousands of pounds to the underwriters. The poor creature, in her younger days, witnessed her husband struggling with, and swallowed up by the billows,

"In sight of home and friends that thronged to save."



This circumstance seems to have prompted her present devoted and solitary life, in which her only enjoyment is doing good.

442. He may promote the happiness of his neighbor in a *negative* way, by not injuring him in his character or reputation; by not standing in the way of his prosperity or advancement; by not interrupting him in his innocent amusements; and by refraining from everything that would tend to injure him in his trade or profession.

443. Such offices every one has it in his power to bestow, and upon such apparently trivial actions, the happiness of mankind in general more immediately depends, than on many of those legislative arrangements which arrest the attention of a whole empire. For, were they universally performed, the greater part of the miseries which afflict humanity would disappear from the world.

444. Love, under the advantages of a high degree of intellectual talent, wealth, and influence, will endeavor to counteract public evils, and to promote rational schemes of general philanthropy. Some portions of society labor under many physical evils and inconveniences, which tend to injure their health and their comfort, and to obstruct their moral and intellectual improvement. Were the comfort of such portions of society made as particular an object of attention as the acquisition of wealth, every obstacle to its accomplishment would soon be removed.

## II.—*Love to our Fellow-men, considered as Rational and Immortal Beings.*

Man is a rational and immortal, as well as a sensitive being, and therefore the operations of love will have for their ultimate object the promotion of his best interests as a moral and intellectual agent, and as an heir of immortality.

445. In all ages, mental darkness has enveloped the greater portion of our race: the grossest ignorance of the most important truths, accompanied with the most degrading affections and superstitions, still prevails among the greater part of men, our own proud land not excepted. Multitudes of the young, both in city and country, are suffered to shoot up from infancy to manhood as if they were mere animal existences, ignorant of the character and operations of God, of the duties they

owe to their Creator and to one another, and of the eternal state of existence to which they are destined.

446. Love to man, as an intellectual being, will lead to the erection of seminaries of instruction where they are needed, and it will employ every suitable method of diffusing knowledge, and of imparting a useful education.

It will not confine its attention to the instruction of the young, but will endeavor, by writing, by conversation, by actions, by lending and circulating books, by establishing public libraries, and similar methods, to diffuse the rays of intellectual light among men of all ages, ranks, and professions, till ignorance, with its degrading accompaniments, shall be banished from society.

In a word, it will endeavor to make every branch of knowledge subservient to the illustration of the character and the revelation of God, and to the preparing of mankind for the employments of that nobler state of existence to which they may aspire.

447. In view of his immortal nature, involved, as it is, in moral degradation, it becomes one of the highest offices of love to promote its eternal well-being, which is jeopardized by ignorance and by depravity of heart and life.

The man of enlightened benevolence will not rest satisfied with prayers and wishes for the salvation of men; so far as the circle of his influence extends he will endeavor to instruct the ignorant, to arouse the reckless, to reclaim the dissipated, to convince the skeptic, to train up the young in the knowledge of God and in the paths of virtue, and to encourage and animate every one who is inquiring the way of life.

448. He will give due encouragement, by his advice and by his wealth, to Christian churches, and to faithful, pious, and intelligent ministers of religion. He will patronize every rational scheme for the propagation of the Christian religion among the nations. He will encourage the translation of the Scriptures into the languages of all kindreds and tribes: he will give countenance to societies formed for circulating the Bible in foreign lands and in his own: and he will assist in sending forth intelligent and philanthropic missionaries to unenlightened tribes, for the purpose of diffusing the blessings of knowledge, civilization, and religion.

He will also set himself in opposition to every species

of bigotry and intolerance, and to all those petty jealousies and bitter animosities which have so long distracted the Christian church, which have thrown odium on its character, and prevented the harmonious intercourse and coöperation of the followers of Jesus.

[Dick's Philosophy of Religion.]

437. In what two points of view may man be considered ?

438. In regard to man's corporeal system, what are some of the principal wants that require to be supplied, and what are the more common and painful sufferings which require to be alleviated ?

439. In reference to these wants and sufferings, what are the operations of love, when genuine and ardent ?

440. What can such a man do for this object ?

441. What further can he do ?

442. How may a man promote the happiness of his neighbor even in a *negative* way ?

443. What importance is to be attached to such offices of love ?

444. In cases where a high degree of intellectual talent, of wealth and influence is possessed, may not, and will not love take a wider range in its beneficent operation ?

445. When we consider man as an intellectual being, standing in various important relations to his God, and to his fellow-creatures, what are some of the numerous evils that are to be remedied ?

446. How will love to man as an intellectual being operate to the removal of the ignorance that prevails ?

447. As man is possessed, also, of an immortal nature, to what exertions will love prompt us ?

448. What further action will the man of enlightened benevolence and philanthropy be disposed to adopt ?

## CHAPTER IV.

### THE TEN REVEALED PRECEPTS OF HUMAN DUTY.

WE have already considered the duty of man as inculcated in the two fundamental precepts of love to God, and to our neighbor ; also the explanation of the latter in what has been called the Golden Rule, and in the apostle Paul's description of the duty of charity, or love.

Love to our Maker and to our fellow-men, is the principle of obedience. Our various duties are merely the development of it. "On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets ;" that is, the precepts delivered in the Pentateuch, and in the prophetic writings, delineate the different modes in which love to God and to man is expressed, and they will be obeyed by every man in whom this love exists.

It is the design of the whole of the Old Testament dispensation to illustrate and enforce these laws, and to produce all those excellent tempers which are embraced in the love of God and of our neighbor. This appears to be the grand object of all the historical facts, religious institutions, devotional exercises, moral maxims, prophecies, exhortations, promises, and threatenings, which it records.

These principles, now that they are communicated and sanctioned by divine authority, appear quite accordant to the dictates of enlightened reason, and calculated to promote the happiness of the intelligent creation; yet we never find that the moral systems of pagan philosophers, in any country, were built on this foundation, or that they assumed them as indispensable axioms to guide them in their speculations on the subject of ethics.

The most important precepts of the Pentateuch, or Five Books, written by Moses, exclusive of the two already referred to, are the *ten precepts or commandments*, often called the *Decalogue* or *Moral Law*, recorded in the twentieth chapter of the book of Exodus.

#### SECTION I.—CIRCUMSTANCES IN WHICH THE MORAL LAW WAS DELIVERED AT MOUNT SINAI.

449. IT may, and should serve as an incitement to study the moral law with deeper interest, and to obey it with the greater diligence and care, to consider and appreciate those circumstances of awful grandeur and of supernatural displays, in the midst of which this celebrated law was originally delivered to men. A just, perhaps, though still inadequate idea of those circumstances may be acquired from the following admirable sketch by the Rev. J. T. Headly, extracted and condensed, from the New-York Observer of Feb. 28, 1846. It would be well, first, however, to read the more brief, and perhaps even more impressive account given us by God himself, by the pen of Moses, and which is recorded in the nineteenth chapter of the book of Exodus.

450. "Standing in the midst of some of the most desolate scenery in the world, MOUNT SINAI lifts its huge form into the heavens, like some monster slumbering in conscious strength. Its bald and naked summit, its barren and rocky sides, and all its somber features, correspond perfectly to the surrounding scene. It is a wild and des-



olate spot ; and were there even no associations connected with it, the loneliness and gloom that surround it would arrest the traveler, and cause him to remember it long afterward. But Mount Sinai has associations with the divine instructions given on its summit, which render it chief among the sacred mountains.

“Behold the white tents of Israel, scattered like snow-flakes at the base of that treeless, barren mountain. The hum of a mighty population is there, and those flowing tents on which the parting sun is leaving his farewell glories are the only pleasing objects that meet the eye in this dreary region. A solemn hush is upon everything as the moon sails up the heavens, flooding with her gentle light the tented host. Moses has declared that on the third morning the eternal God is to place his feet on that distant mountain-top in presence of all the people. Awe-struck and expectant, the sons of Jacob go from tent to tent to speak of this strange event, and then come out and look on the mysterious mountain on which it is to transpire. Unconscious of its high destiny, the distant summit leans against the solemn sky, and nothing there betokens preparation for the stupendous scene. But at length the morning comes, and that vast encampment is filled with the murmur of the moving multitude, all turned anxiously to distant Sinai. And lo ! a solitary cloud comes drifting along the morning sky, and catches against the top of the mountain and remains there ; and suddenly, thunder began to speak from its depths, and the fierce lightning traversed its bosom, gleaming and flashing through every part of it. That cloud was God’s pavilion ; the thunder was its sentinels, and the lightning the lances’ points as they moved around the sacred trust.

“The commotion grew wilder every moment, till the successive claps of thunder were like the explosion of ten thousand cannon shaking the earth. Amid this incessant firing of heaven’s artillery, suddenly from out the bosom of that cloud came a single trumpet blast, not like the thrilling music of a thousand trumpets that heralds the shock of cavalry, but one solitary clarion note, with no sinking cadence or rising swell, but an infinite sound, rising in its ascensive power, till the universe was filled with the strain. The incessant thunders that rock the heights cannot drown it, for clearer, fuller, louder, it

peals on over the astonished spectators, till their hearts sink away in fear, and nature herself stands awe-struck and trembling before it. And lo! columns of smoke begin to rise fast and furious from that mysterious cloud, as if a volcano had opened its bosom, and the pent up elements were discharging themselves in the upper air; and the sturdy mountain rocks to and fro on its base, as if in the grasp of an earthquake. ‘And the smoke thereof ascended as the smoke of a great furnace, and the whole mount quaked greatly.’

“Amid this rapid roll of thunder, and flashing of lightning, and fiercely ascending volumes of smoke, and convulsive throbs of Sinai, and while that trumpet strain still ‘waxed louder and louder,’ Moses led the trembling Israelites forth to the foot of the mountain. Suddenly the uproar ceased, and the thunders hushed their voice, and the last echo of the trumpet died away, and all was still. And from that silent cloud came a voice more fearful than them all—the voice of Jehovah—calling them up into the mount. The great lawgiver of Israel parted from his people, and with solemn step was seen scaling the rocks and climbing the heights, till at last the cloud received him in its bosom.

“The moral law was given, and also the civil code, which men have so learnedly traced to the social compact. The first act in the mighty drama was ended, and Moses was ordered to bring up Aaron, and Nadab, and Abihu, and seventy of the elders, to worship in the mountain; and God showed himself in his glory to them.

“When this strange worship was ended, the voice of Jehovah was again heard issuing from the cloud; but what a change had passed over its dark form. A serene and pure radiance began to play around it, quivering like a bright light with its own intensity. Brighter and brighter it grew, till the eye turned away dazzled by the sight. Brighter still it gleamed, till it seemed a glowing furnace, shooting forth living fire on every side. Its wrathful streaks streamed down the mountain, filling the cavities with deeper gloom, touching every rock and crag with flame, and bathing the white tints in a lurid light. And when the night came on, and darkness wrapped the world, that mountain was one blaze of light, shedding a stronger luster on the barren scene, and revealing every

face and form of that immense host, as if they stood beneath a burning palace,—painting with terrible distinctness, and in lines of fire, the surrounding landscape. The stars went out before its brilliancy, and the moon looked dark in its splendor. For six days and nights did the glory flame on, shedding such a baptism on the wondering camp as was never before witnessed by mortal eye, for ‘the sight of the glory of the Lord was like a devouring fire on the top of the mount in the eyes of the children of Israel.’ Little sleep was in the tents of Jacob then, for each one held his breath in awe, wondering what next would happen in this succession of strange scenes. At length that voice, before which nature herself seemed to change, again issued from the clouds, calling Moses to a second interview. Taking Joshua with him, he again ascended the hill, and was wrapped from sight ‘forty days and forty nights.’ ”

Passing over the description of the idolatrous and shameful occurrences that took place among the Israelites in the vale below during this solemn period, while Moses was on the mount; and passing over the scenes of exemplary punishment enacted upon the guilty, by command of Moses at his return from the mount, bearing in his arms the tables of the law, Mr. Headly proceeds as follows:—

“Whyspeak of the after-repentance and consecration—of the second ascent into Sinai—of the passing of Jehovah before Moses—of the still radiance that beamed from his face as he came once more unto the people, until they turned dazzled from his presence? The mighty pageant has at length closed—the cloud column rose from before the tabernacle and moved into the desert; the tents were struck, and the host, headed by that mysterious pillar, in one long column rose from before the tabernacle, and moved into the desert; the tents were struck; and the host, headed by that mysterious pillar, in one long column disappeared in the wilderness, and that fearful mountain was left once more alone amid the bleak and barren scenery.

“Turned into sapphire by Jehovah’s feet, consecrated by his touch, and baptized by the cloud of fire and of glory, Mount Sinai stood the *second sacred mountain* on the earth.”

451. The most solemn preparations (says Dr. Thomas Dick) were made for this divine manifestation; the people of Israel were commanded to purify themselves



from every mental and corporeal pollution, and strictly enjoined to keep within the boundaries marked out for them, and not to rush within the limits assigned to these awful symbols of the Deity. An assemblage of celestial beings, from another region of creation, was present on this occasion, to perform important services, to swell the grandeur of the scene, and to be witnesses of the impressive transactions of that solemn day.

452. In order that the impressive words which were uttered on that day might not be forgotten in future generations, they were *written on tables of stone with the finger of God*. They were not merely written, but *engraved*, or cut out of the solid stone, so that they could not be erased; they were inscribed on a solid, and not perishable material. "The tables were written on *both their sides*." This was intended to prevent the possibility of anything being added to the law or taken from it.

The tables were *two* in number, the one containing the precepts which inculcate love to God; the other containing those which enjoin the love of our neighbor. These laws, thus engraven on the most durable materials, were deposited in the most sacred part of the tabernacle, in the ark of the covenant, under the mercy-seat.

453. All the striking circumstances referred to in the foregoing descriptions, were evidently intended to proclaim the majesty and grandeur of the Supreme Legislator; the excellence and perfection of his law, as being the unalterable rule of rectitude; and the dreadful consequences which must ensue to all those who persist in the violation of its precepts.

454. "As the people of Israel may be viewed under a threefold aspect, so we have a foundation laid in this fact for a *threefold acceptance of the word law*.

"They may be viewed, (1.) as rational and responsible creatures, depending (like ourselves) upon God, and subject to his will, as the supreme Ruler and Judge of the universe. In this capacity the *law of the Ten Commandments*, or the *moral law*, was given to them, which is substantially one and the same with the *law of nature*, and binding on all men as such. (2.) As the church of the Old Testament, expecting the Messiah, and furnished with a system of worship embracing a great variety of rites and ceremonies, which pointed more or less distinctly to him.



Viewed in this ecclesiastical character, God bestowed upon them the *ceremonial law*, which was a body of rules and precepts regulating their religious worship. (3.) As a peculiar people, having a civil polity and constitution especially appointed for them, and distinguishing them from all other nations, their government being in fact a *Theocracy*, in which God himself was their Chief Magistrate. Viewed in this light a code of *civil* or *political* laws was prescribed them. The term "the law" is sometimes applied to one of these systems, and sometimes to another, and again to the whole taken collectively; so that we must often be governed in great measure by the context in determining the precise sense in which the term is used. It is however most legitimately and emphatically employed in reference to the first of these, or the *moral law*, which was distinguished from the others by being audibly delivered by God himself, and afterward written by him upon two tables of stone.

[Professor Bush.]

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449. What may serve as an incitement to the study of the moral law delivered at Mount Sinai?

450. Can you present the substance of Headly's beautiful sketch of the circumstances in which the law was delivered?

451. What account does Dr. Thomas Dick give of the delivery of the Law?

452. What particular honor was put upon the moral law, in the manner of its being recorded and preserved?

453. What was the probable design, and what is the tendency, of all the circumstances attending the delivery of the law, the record, and the mode of securing its preservation?

454. In how many acceptations is the term *law* employed in the sacred scriptures?

## SECTION II.—RULES FOR THE RIGHT INTERPRETATION OF THE TEN COMMANDMENTS, AND OTHER PRECEPTIVE PARTS OF THE SACRED SCRIPTURES.

455. THE Ten Commandments are to be regarded as exhibiting *only a summary of duty*. They do not enter into detail, but are general heads, from which particulars are to be deduced by ourselves, or are to be collected from the commentaries upon them, which are scattered throughout the Scriptures. Certain *rules* have been laid down for the right interpretation of this law, and other preceptive parts of the Bible; and are the following:—

456. RULE I.—It should always be remembered that "the law is spiritual," as it is called by an apostle; and

consequently, that it *requires something more than external conformity to its precepts.*

Most of the precepts, when literally understood, relate only to the outward conduct ; as, "Thou shalt not kill," "Thou shalt not steal," &c. ; but the last, which says "Thou shalt not covet," regulates the movements of the heart ; and this instance clearly shows the spirit which pervades all the other precepts. It is an admonition in the close by the Lawgiver that he ultimately regards the state of the mind. A human legislator aims at nothing more than the compliance of his subjects with the letter of the law. The heart lies beyond his jurisdiction. But the moral law emanated from Him who is the former of our spirits as well as of our bodies, has a right to the homage of both, and pays no regard to an action, or to a course of actions, unless the disposition from which it proceeds be such as he can approve.

*When, therefore, the law enjoins any duty, it enjoins the corresponding state of mind : when it forbids any sin, it forbids the state of mind which leads to it.*

457. RULE II.—*When one form of a particular sin is forbidden, all the forms of that sin are forbidden ; and when one form of a particular duty is enjoined, all the forms of that duty are also enjoined.*

458. The law says, "Thou shalt not kill ;" but we must not limit this precept to the prohibition of actual murder alone. *It forbids, at the same time, all injuries offered to the person of another ; all malice, and revenge, and all the expressions of malignant feeling.* Our Savior has authorized this explanation, in the fifth chapter of Matthew's gospel.

459. *When he commands us to love our neighbor as ourselves,* he commands us to perform all the good offices which love naturally suggests, and by which its sincerity is expressed.

460. RULE III.—*When any duty is enjoined, the contrary sin is forbidden, and when any sin is forbidden, the contrary duty is enjoined.* Is. lviii. 13. Eph. iv. 28.

461. When the law forbids us to kill, or unjustly to deprive a man of life, it commands us to use the means of preserving his life, to give him the counsel, the warnings, and the assistance which are necessary for his safety.

462. When the law commands us to honor our parents,

it forbids neglect of them, contempt for them, or the doing of anything which may be injurious or offensive to them.

463. RULE IV.—*Where a duty is required, the use of all the means of performing it rightly, is required; and where a sin is forbidden, every cause, and even every occasion of it, is prohibited.*

464. When a precept enjoins justice, it enjoins diligence in business, prudence in conducting our affairs, and economy, that we may be able to satisfy every lawful demand upon us; and hence it follows that if a man has brought himself by indolence, folly, and extravagance, into such a situation that he cannot pay his debts, he is not so much to be pitied, as to be condemned.

465. (1.) When the Scriptures prohibit uncleanness, they prohibit drunkenness, gluttony, idleness, and all the provocations of the sensual appetites.

(2.) When the law forbids murder, it forbids also, wrath, malice, and revenge, which prompt men to commit that crime. Matt. v. 21, 22.

(3.) When it prohibits theft, it forbids covetous desires; and it forbids idleness, which may prompt us to steal by reducing us to want.

466. RULE V.—*That which is forbidden, is at no time to be done; but that which is required, is to be done only, as opportunity is afforded.*

467. It is never lawful to murder, to steal, to commit adultery. No situation can occur in which a man shall be permitted to do these things. A man is bound to refrain, although he should expose himself to the loss of his life.

468. That which is required, is to be performed, as often as opportunity is afforded, and when it does not interfere with the performance of our other duties.

(1.) We ought to minister, with our substance, to the wants of the indigent; but to do so is not our duty if we are ourselves so poor as to have nothing of it to spare.

(2.) We ought to worship God, but we cannot be constantly engaged in acts of devotion, for we are commanded to abound in other duties equally necessary.

469. RULE VI.—*The precepts of the second table of the law must give place to those of the first when both cannot be obeyed.* This rule does not help us to interpret the law;

it is intended to point out the relative importance of its duties. The illustrations usually given of this rule are more apparent than real, because, on reflection, it will appear that in such cases there is no interference of duties.

470. (1.) The love of our relatives must be subordinate to the love of God, and Christ has said that we must hate father and mother when fidelity to him requires us to do so; by which is meant that we must *love* parents *less* than Christ. See Matt. x. 37, 38; Mal. i. 2; Gen. xxix. 30, 31.

(2.) When the commands of our earthly superiors interfere with the commands of God, we must prefer the latter to the former.

471. In such cases there is really no interference of duties. The authority of men over others is limited, and ceases the moment it is exercised in requiring anything unlawful. When the commands of parents and magistrates are opposed to the commands of God, there is no choice of duties; the will of God is the sole obligation which an enlightened conscience will acknowledge.

*There can be no jarring moral obligations*; and it is ignorance or inattention which makes them appear incompatible. We can never owe that to man which God claims for himself.

472. RULE VII.—*Whatever we ourselves are commanded to be, to do, or to forbear, we are obliged to endeavor, in our several stations in society, to make others around us to be, to do, or to forbear.*

473. (1.) It is the duty of other men, as well as of ourselves, to glorify God by obeying his commandments; and zeal for his glory will excite us to use all lawful means to induce them to do it.

(2.) Whatever sin is forbidden to ourselves, we are forbidden to partake with others in it, either by example, advice, connivance, or by giving them occasion to commit it: “Be not partaker of other men’s sins; keep thyself pure.” [Dr. Dick’s Lectures; Colquhoun on the Law.]

455. In what light are these Ten Commandments to be regarded?

456. What is the first rule of interpretation; and how is it established?

457. What is the second rule of interpretation?

458. What example may be given of the first part of this rule?

459. What example may be given of the second part of this rule?

460. What is the third rule?

461. What example may be furnished, of affirmative precepts being included in the negative?



462. What example may be given of negative precepts being included in the affirmative ?
463. What is the fourth rule ?
464. What example can be produced, in regard to the first part of this rule ?
465. What examples are there of the second part of this rule ?
466. What is the fifth rule ?
467. How can you illustrate the first part of this rule ?
468. How can you illustrate the second part of this rule ?
469. What is the sixth rule ?
470. What illustration may be given of this rule ?
471. How does it appear that in such cases there is really no interference of duties ?
472. What is the seventh rule ?
473. What examples of the application of this rule may be furnished ?

### SECTION III.—PERFECTION OF THE MORAL LAW DELIVERED AT SINAI.

474. By the judicious application of the rules just set forth for the interpretation of the Law, with the assistance afforded by other passages of Scripture, we may deduce from the ten precepts of the Decalogue all the duties which we owe to God, and to man. It is a complete code of morality. As no man can attempt without impiety to take anything from it, so there is no need that anything should be added to it.

475. Those who affirm that Christ has corrected and enlarged the law, unjustly accuse it of imperfection in its original form ; and they totally misapprehend the design of his commentaries upon it in the Gospels, which was not to new-model the law, but to free it from the corrupt interpretations which the Scribes had given of it, on the authority of tradition. He evidently recognized its perfection in his answer, formerly quoted, to the question “ Which is the great commandment of the law ? ” and the apostle Paul, who was enlightened by his Spirit, pronounced it to be “ holy, just, and good.”

[Dr. Dick’s Lectures.]

### *The Skeptical Lawyer.*

476. MANY considerations might be urged to excite to the diligent study of this law, and to show its perfection and importance. The exposition of the law will discover to us these qualities—but as a preliminary to it, the experience of an eminent lawyer of one of the northern United States may be submitted. Its authenticity may be relied on, as it is published in one of the papers of the American Tract Society.

477. This lawyer was once a very profane man, and a skeptic. On a certain occasion he asked another lawyer what books he should read on the evidences of Christianity. He was advised to read, in the first instance, the Bible itself, inasmuch as most infidels are very ignorant of it, and furthermore, in order to reason correctly on any subject, it is necessary to understand what it is that we reason about. It was stated to him also, that the internal evidences of the Bible are even stronger than the external. He was advised to begin his perusal of the Bible, with the book of Genesis.

This advice was complied with; the aid of commentaries, and of his legal friend, was employed in solving difficulties.

One evening, some time after this course of study was commenced, the Christian lawyer called on his skeptical friend, and found him walking his room, and so profoundly engaged in thought that his own entrance into the room was not noticed, until he asked his friend what it was that occupied his attention.

The skeptic replied, "I have been reading the moral law."

"Well, what do you think of it?" asked the other.

"I will tell you what I *used* to think of it," said the skeptic. "I supposed that Moses was the leader of a horde of banditti; that having a strong mind, he acquired great influence over a superstitious people; and that on Mount Sinai he played off some sort of fireworks, to the amazement of his ignorant followers, who imagined, in their mingled fear and superstition, that the exhibition was supernatural."

"But what do you think now?" followed his friend.

"I have been looking," replied the skeptic, "into the *nature of that law*. I have been trying to see whether I can add anything to it, or take anything from it, so as to make it better. Sir, I cannot. *It is perfect*."

"The First Commandment," continued he, "directs us to make the Creator the object of supreme love and reverence. That is right: if he be our creator, preserver, and supreme benefactor, we ought to treat him, and *no other*, as such.

"The Second Commandment forbids idolatry. That precept certainly is right.

“The Third, with equal justness, forbids profanity.

“The Fourth fixes a time for religious worship. If there be a God, he ought certainly to be worshiped. It is suitable that there should be an outward homage, significant of our inward regard. If God is to be worshiped, it is proper that some *time* should be set apart for that purpose, when all may worship him harmoniously, and without interruption. One day in seven is certainly not too much; and I do not know that it is too little.

“The Fifth defines the peculiar duties arising from family relations.

“Injuries to our neighbor are then *classified* by the moral law. They are divided into offenses against life, chastity, property, and character. And,” said he, applying a legal idea with legal acuteness, “I notice that the greatest offense in each class is expressly forbidden. Thus, the greatest injury to life is murder: to chastity, adultery: to property, theft: to character, perjury. Now the greater offense must include the lesser of the same kind. Murder must include every injury to life; adultery every injury to purity; and so of the rest. And the moral code is closed and perfected by a prohibition, forbidding *every improper desire* in regard to our neighbor.

“I have been thinking,” he proceeded, “WHERE DID MOSES GET THAT LAW? I have read history. The Egyptians and the adjacent nations were idolators; so were the Greeks and Romans; and the wisest and best of Greeks or Romans never gave a code of morals like this. *Where did Moses get this law*, which surpasses the wisdom and philosophy of the most enlightened ages? He lived at a period comparatively barbarous; but he has given a law, in which the learning and sagacity of all subsequent times can detect no flaw. *Where did he get it?* He could not have soared so far above his age as to have devised it himself. I am satisfied where he obtained it. *It must have come from Heaven.* I am convinced of the truth of the religion of the Bible.”

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474. How may we learn all our duties from the ten brief precepts delivered at Sinai?

475. What mistakes concerning the Decalogue require to be corrected?

476. What purpose is answered by the account of the skeptical lawyer?

477. What, substantially, are the facts concerning this lawyer, and what did he discover in the study of the Decalogue?

## SECTION IV.—OBLIGATION AND PERPETUITY OF THE MORAL LAW.

478. THE obligation of the moral law is *universal*. All men, in every region of the earth, are subject to its authority. It was, substantially, the law given to man at his creation, from which his subsequent apostacy could not release him.

It is founded in relations which subsist wherever there are human beings endowed with reason and the power of volition.

479. *The other laws* given to the Jews were *national and local*. The ceremonial law could not be practiced in all its parts, but within narrow limits. The Temple could not be resorted to on all necessary occasions, nor the three annual festivals be observed in Jerusalem by persons whose usual residence was in the remote countries of Asia, Africa, and Europe.

480. The judicial law was the civil law of the Jews, intended solely for the government of their nation; to which, therefore, other nations were not more subject than men living in one country are at present subject to the laws of another.

Nay, some things were enjoined upon the Jews, which by other nations are considered as unlawful; for example, the marriage of a widow to the brother of her deceased husband who had died without children.

The ceremonial law is abolished, as well as the judicial, or civil, so far as it did not embody the moral precepts, which are of perpetual obligation.

481. While the authority of certain ordinances, religious and civil, extended only to the Jews, *the Decalogue is the law of nations*. Morality is not the subject of positive institution, and of human regulation. It is not determined by geographical boundaries, so that what is right on one side of a river or mountain is wrong on the other, and virtue and vice exchange characters, according to changes of climate. Piety toward God, truth, justice, and charity toward men, and the exercise of temperance or self-government, are duties in every country under heaven. The moral law is the rule of our present conduct, and will be the rule of our future judgment.

There cannot be a more erroneous view of the Christian



religion, than to suppose that it sets men free from the obligations of morality.

482. To produce conformity to the moral law is the design of the death of Christ, of his ministrations in heaven, of the operations of the spirit upon the human heart, of the institutions of the Gospel, and the dispensations of Providence.

The work of redemption would be only half performed in delivering men from the punishment of sin. To emancipate them from the influence and practice of it; and to render them obedient to God: this is the other half, and is surely of equal importance. [Dick's Lectures.]

478. Within what limits does the obligation of the moral law extend?

479. Was the obligation of the ceremonial law, also universal?

480. Was the obligation of the judicial law, universal?

481. How does it appear that the moral law is perpetual, as well as universal, in its obligation?

482. By what means is a conformity to the moral law secured to men?

#### SECTION V.—EXPOSITION OF THE MORAL LAW.

483. THE purpose of dividing the law into two tables, seems to have been to distinguish the two classes of precepts which the Decalogue contains. We can conceive of no other reason. The two classes obviously embrace our duties to God and our duties to man, respectively. So our Savior seems to have divided them, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart: and thy neighbor as thyself."

On this principle the first four precepts must have belonged to the first table; and the six following, to the second. In confirmation of this view may be stated the fact, that the apostle calls the fifth precept, "the first commandment, with promise:" he must be understood to represent it as the first precept of the second table.

484. It is not necessary to expose the inexcusable conduct of those who, to justify the use of images, have attached the second precept to the first; and who, to make out the complement of ten precepts, have been compelled to divide the tenth, though it admits not properly of division, as it relates to only a single point, covetousness, or unlawful desire.

485. The *first* precept points out the OBJECT OF WORSHIP: and while it forbids us to have any other God be-

fore him, it calls upon us to acknowledge and worship Him alone.

The *second* prescribes the MEANS OF WORSHIP, not by images, or any other plan of human invention, but by the rites and ordinances which are divinely appointed.

The *third* declares the MANNER in which the service of God should be performed, namely, with reverence, as opposed to profaneness, and every abuse of religious institutions.

The *fourth* specifies the TIME of worship, to wit, one day in seven, which is to be wholly devoted to God; not, however, to the exclusion of other seasons which the events of Providence may point out, and the regular devotional exercises of every day.

486. The proclamation of this law was prefaced by these words:—" *I am Jehovah thy God,*" which contain an ample ground and satisfactory reason for the obedience of every human being.

They evidently imply that He is the self-existent and eternal Being, who created all worlds, and peopled them with their inhabitants; that he has sovereign authority to prescribe a rule of action to his creatures; and that he knows best what laws are requisite to preserve the order, and secure the happiness of his vast empire.

That *these laws are not mere acts of divine sovereignty, but founded upon the nature of things*, and are calculated to preserve the harmony and order of the intelligent universe, will appear from the following illustrations and remarks.

## THE FIRST TABLE OF THE LAW.

### THE FIRST COMMANDMENT.

" *Thou shalt have no other gods before me.*"

487. IT is worthy of remark that each precept of the law is addressed to men in their *individual* capacity, in order to impress their minds more deeply with their personal accountability, and to excite them to a more diligent and conscientious obedience.

#### I. *Prohibitions involved in the First Precept.*

488. (1.) This precept forbids, in the *first place*, ATHEISM, which may be divided into *explicit* and *constructive*.

489. *Explicit atheism* consists in the formal denial of

the existence of God. He is an atheist who contends that the universe contains no other intelligence than the human mind ; says that the universe is eternal ; that there is nothing in it but matter and motion, and talks of nature, and chance, and fate—words which have no meaning, but serve as a substitute in discourse for the name of a living, designing agent, by whom all things were created, and are governed.

490. Constructive atheism is an expression which is designed to embrace all those sentiments which amount to the denial of God, or lead to this conclusion, although they do not formally express it.

Such atheism was charged upon Epicurus and his followers, who, as Cicero says, granted in words that there were gods, but in reality took them away, because they represented them as removed to a distance from mortals, and taking no interest in their affairs.

491. The same charge which was advanced against Epicurus may be brought, with equal justice, against those who deny the providence of God, his particular oversight and regulation of each and all of the affairs of this world ; and who substitute in the room of the all-perfect Being of the Scriptures, a god fashioned according to their own likeness, an ideal of their own brain.

492. The expression, *practical atheism*, denotes such conduct as virtually contradicts the profession of the lips ; accordingly an apostle speaks of some “ who profess to know God, but in works deny him, being abominable and disobedient, and to every good work reprobate.”

· 493. (2.) In the *second place*, this precept forbids POLYTHEISM, or the worship of more deities than one.

494. Polytheism was introduced long before the time when the law was given at Mount Sinai. It existed in Chaldea while Abraham sojourned there ; and it seems that this patriarch was a worshiper of false gods before he was called to leave his country and his kindred. By the time of the exodus from Egypt, the evil had spread far and wide ; and we have reason to believe that Polytheism prevailed among all nations, although there might still be some individuals who continued exclusively to adore the Creator of heaven and earth.

495. The design of the call of Abraham was to sepa-

rate his descendants from the apostate race, and to constitute them a distinct and peculiar people, among whom the knowledge and worship of Jehovah should be preserved till the time for the introduction of Christianity, when He would again reveal himself to the world, and destroy the gods of the Gentiles.

*By this precept the religions of all heathen nations are condemned*; for they are directly opposed to the fundamental doctrine of the unity of the divine essence; and they either exclude the true God, or they associate others with him as sharers in the honors to which He alone is entitled.

496. We are informed by Hesiod, Varro, and other ancient authors, that no less than *thirty thousand subordinate divinities* were comprised in that system of Polytheism which prevailed among the Greeks and Romans. They had both celestial and terrestrial deities. They assigned peculiar gods to the fountains, the rivers, the hills, the mountains, the valleys, the groves, the sea, and even to hell itself.

To cities, fields, houses, families, gates, nuptial chambers, marriages, births, deaths, sepulchres, trees, and gardens, they also appropriated distinct and peculiar deities. Their chief idol was Jupiter, whom they called the father of gods and men.

Instead of worshiping the *living* God, they deified a host of *dead men*, called heroes, distinguished for nothing so much as for murder, adultery, sodomy, rapine, cruelty, drunkenness, and all kinds of debauchery.

To such contemptible divinities splendid temples were erected, adorations addressed, costly offerings presented, and rites and ceremonies performed, subversive of every principle of decency and morality, and degrading to the reason and character of man.

[For a full account of the rise of Polytheism and Pantheism, consult Douglas on Errors regarding Religion; also Dewar's Moral Philosophy, vol. ii. pp. 152-182.]

497. In ancient Egypt, the meanest, and the most contemptible objects—sheep, cats, bulls, dogs, cows, storks, apes, vultures, and other birds of prey; wolves, and several sorts of oxen, were exalted as objects of adoration. Each city and district in Egypt entertained a peculiar devotion to some animal or other, as an object of worship;



nourished it with the greatest care and delicacy when living, and mourned deeply for it when dead.

498. If the Egyptians, the Greeks, and the Romans, who were distinguished from the rest of the world for their improvements in literature, science, and the arts, had so far renounced their allegiance to the true God, we may rest assured that the surrounding nations were sunk still further into the pollution of idolatry and of mental debasement. The Phœnicians, the Syrians, the Canaanites, the Chaldeans, the Babylonians, the Arabians, the Scythians, the Ethiopians, the Carthaginians, the ancient Gauls, Germans, and Britons, were, if possible, more deeply debased, and mingled with their idolatrous rites many cruel, obscene, and vile practices.

499. The moral debasement of modern heathen nations, in consequence of Polytheism, is about as great as that of the ancient. Even the Hindoos, the Burmans, the Chinese, the Persians, and the Japanese, though ranked among the most polished nations of the heathen world, are sunk into the grossest ignorance of the true God, and are found perpetrating, in their religious worship, deeds revolting to humanity, and stained with cruelty and injustice.

500. All *pretenses to witchcraft* or to magic, fortune-telling, charms, astrology, or enchantments, are, by some, considered as herein prohibited; as, in these ways, men expect that information or assistance from other beings which God only can afford.

501. It has been alleged that ancient legislators and philosophers were not idolators themselves; that their doctrines to a considerable extent counteracted the tendency of idolatry, and that the mysteries which were so generally established, and to which the initiated only were admitted, were expressly designed to preserve the knowledge of the one true God. But Dr. Dewar and others have proved that these suppositions are unfounded; and that the philosophers and legislators of antiquity were the supporters and patrons of idolatry. Without alluding to all their erroneous opinions on this subject, there was one which, more than any other, seemed to make idolatry a duty, and furnished the most plausible arguments in its favor—namely, that the soul of the world (*anima mundi*) is God; that the mind which governs the world

passeth through every part of it, as the soul doth in us :  
or, as the poet has expressed it,—

“ All are but parts of one stupendous whole,  
Whose body nature is, and God the soul ;  
That changed through all, and yet in all the same,  
Great in the earth as in the ethereal flame ;  
Warms in the sun, refreshes in the breeze,  
Glowes in the stars, and blossoms in the trees ;  
Lives through all life, extends through all extent,  
Spreads undivided, operates unspent.”

These lines, while they *may* be understood as merely expressing the doctrine of the omnipresence of God, and in that view must be considered as peculiarly beautiful and sublime, do also give a lively representation of the grossly erroneous doctrine of the Stoics and other heathen philosophers ; for some of these, after proving the existence and providence of *the gods* from the beauty and order of the works that are made, gravely maintained that the world is an animal, reasonable, wise, and happy, and therefore is God. On this principle, whatever parts of the universe they chose to deify, were parts of God, and therefore entitled to religious worship. They themselves, also, and their fellow-men, were parts of the divinity, a notion which tended to produce that pride and self-sufficiency for which the Stoics were so distinguished. Need we wonder that an apostle should caution the disciples of Christianity to beware lest any man should spoil them through philosophy and vain deceit ?

[Dewar, vol. ii. p. 170.]

502. Such effects have been produced by a departure from this fundamental law of the Creator, as correspond to the religious system adopted. Man generally copies the actions of those whom he conceives to be placed in a superior station. When, therefore, the gods were introduced to his view, as swollen with pride, mad with rage, fired with revenge, inflamed with lust, engaged in battles and contests, delighting in scenes of blood and rapine, in hatred, and mutual contentions, and in all kinds of riot and debauchery, it was natural to suppose that such passions and crimes would be imitated by their blinded votaries. Accordingly, we find that such vices universally prevailed, even among the politest nations of antiquity, and some of their sacred rites solemnized in honor of their gods were so bestial and shocking, as to excite

horror in every mind possessed of the least sense of decency and virtue. Dreadful tortures were inflicted on their bodies, to appease their offended deities; human victims, in vast numbers, were sacrificed. On the altars of the city of Mexico *twenty thousand* human beings are said to have been sacrificed every year in the most horrid manner; and *fifty thousand* in the various parts of the empire.

In Hindostan, even in our own day, several thousands of women have been annually burned on the funeral piles of their deceased husbands, as victims to the religion they profess; beside multitudes of other human victims, who have been crushed to death under the wheels of that infernal engine which supports the idol Juggernaut.

503. The violation, by Polytheism, of the first precept of the moral law, is the greatest crime, next to Atheism, of which a rational creature can be guilty. It is a comprehensive summary of wickedness. As to Atheism, its horrid effects, even when restrained by remaining impressions of Theism upon the mind, were developed during the French Revolution at the close of the last century.

504. Were either Atheism or Polytheism to become universal in the world, there is no crime, no species of cruelty, which would not ere long be perpetrated without a blush in the open face of day.

505. From the foregoing facts and statements, we may learn our obligation to the goodness of God for enacting laws to counteract the influence of pagan theology.

### (3.) *Polytheism, or Idolatry, in Christian Lands.*

506. "The precept does not seem to be directed primarily and immediately against that idolatry which consists in the use of fabricated images, although this is virtually forbidden, but *against the putting anything else in the place of the one living and true God.*

"This may be done mentally, as well as manually. There may be idolatry without idols; and the scope of this prohibition seems to be mainly to forbid the making of any other objects, whether persons or things, real or imaginary, the objects of that supreme regard, reverence, esteem, affection, and obedience which we owe to God alone.

"Consequently, the proud man, who idolizes himself;

the ambitious man, who pays homage to popular applause; the covetous man, who deifies wealth; the sensualist, who lives to gratify his low appetites; the doting lover, husband, father, mother, who suffer their hearts to be supremely absorbed in the love of the creature, all come under the charge of transgressing the first commandment.”

[Bush on Exodus.]

507. St. Paul instructs us that the *root and essence of Idolatry*, is the worshiping and serving God's creatures more than God himself. Whoever then loves and serves any one of God's creatures, more than he loves and serves God; whoever makes any one of God's creatures more an object of his thoughts, and allows it to fill a greater space in his mind than God fills,—that man is guilty of idolatry in the spiritual and Christian sense of that word. And by the word creatures, is here meant not living creatures merely, but creatures of every kind; everything which God has made for us, or enabled us to make for ourselves; all the sweet and relishing things we can enjoy in this world; pleasures, honors, riches, comforts of every kind. Therefore if any man is foolish and wicked enough to give up his heart to any one of these creatures, and by means of it suffers himself to be drawn away from serving God, he is an idolator in the sight of heaven.

508. St. Paul, in his epistle to the Colossians, expressly tells us that *covetousness*, or, as the word may perhaps be more closely rendered, *insatiableness and greediness*, is *idolatry*; and again, in the epistle to the Ephesians, he tells us that *the covetous man*, that is, the insatiable and greedy man, *is an idolator*. It matters little what the man is greedy of,—whether he is greedy of money, or of business, or of land, or of meat and drink, or is greedy of praise and honor, and distinction: if a man is greedy of any earthly thing, and does not know when he has had enough, and is ever longing and craving after it, and wishing to add more to more, the sentence is express against that man: St. Paul has declared him to be an idolator.

To set up any worldly thing as the end and object of our chief longings, is to throw away on what is bounded and perishable, the worship due to what is infinite and eternal.

509. Three prominent idols have been introduced from



heathen into Christian lands: their names are, *Mammon*, *Belial*, and *Moloch*. Every greedy thought and covetous desire, is an act of worship paid to Mammon; every lustful thought and impure desire, is an act of worship paid to Belial; every spiteful and revengeful thought, every feeling of ill-will, every desire to do any one an injury, everything like pleasure at our neighbor's hurt—all these are acts of worship and heart-service paid to the hateful and cruel Moloch. Happy, and honorable, would it be for us, to give the Lord of Heaven and Earth as much as the worshipers of Moloch, and Belial, and Mammon readily give to them. [Hare's Discourses.]

510. (4.) If the Polytheism of the Gentiles is condemned by this precept, there can be no just ground of doubt, that the *worship given to saints and angels*, in the church of Rome, is equally forbidden.

Churches are dedicated to them as well as to God; the most solemn services of religion are performed in honor of them; pilgrimages are undertaken to the places which they are understood to favor, and in which their pretended relics are deposited; they are invoked in the most humble postures, and in the usual forms of supplication, as being able everywhere to hear the suppliant; their assistance is implored, and thanks are returned to them for benefits, not only temporal, but spiritual, which they are supposed to have conferred; and, in short, they receive all the honors which the heathen pay to their male and female deities, and all the honors which are paid to God himself.

511. In regard to the kind of worship paid by them to saints and angels, the Romanists make certain distinctions in theory, but these distinctions are in a great majority of cases lost sight of in practice. Beside, there is no excuse for the worship they pay to such beings. If the Gentiles were condemned by an apostle because they did service to them who by nature were not gods, we cannot see how professed Christians should be excused who address their worship to similar objects.

512. Were the plea, which is sometimes made by the worshipers of the Virgin Mary and the saints, a true one: that they only pray to them to intercede with God; yet it would be an insufficient one. For there is no reason to believe that they have any knowledge of such

prayers; or, if they had, as *there is one God*, so there is *one Mediator between God and man*. And we have neither precept, nor allowance, nor example, in the whole Bible, of applying to any other, among all the absent inhabitants of the invisible world. [Secker.]

II.—*Requirements involved in the First Precept.*

513. (1.) *This precept requires* us to have our minds fully established in the doctrine of the existence of God; and to acknowledge Him only, to the exclusion of every rival, whether set up by heathens or by idolatrous Christians.

(2.) It requires us to entertain worthy sentiments of his character and perfections; and with this view to attend to the discoveries, which he has made of himself in his works, and particularly in the sacred scriptures.

(3.) It requires us to be duly affected by those discoveries; to cherish and exercise the affections of which He is the proper object, such as, reverence for his majesty, profound humility, trust in his promises, desires for his favor, dependence upon his care, and submission to his will; and, in a few words, to love him with all our strength, preferring him to all creatures in heaven and on earth, cultivating communion with him, and deriving our chief satisfaction from the uncreated source of felicity.

(4.) It requires us to render to Him the honor to which he is entitled, not only by those affections of our hearts, but by such outward expressions of homage as He has himself prescribed,—to pray to him, to praise him, and devoutly to observe all his institutes.

(5.) It requires us to make Him our ultimate end; and as he has created all things for his glory, to have this as our predominant wish, and constant aim, that we may honor him with our bodies and our spirits, which are his.

[Professor Dick's Lectures; Dick's Philosophy of Religion; Hare's Discourses.]

483. Why, probably, was this law divided into two tables?

484. What unjustifiable freedom have some taken with the arrangement of the Ten Commandments?

485. What brief view may be given of the first four precepts of the Decalogue?

486. What was the preface to the moral law, and what particular importance is to be attached to it?

487. How are men addressed in the Decalogue?

488. What does this precept forbid, in the first place?

489. What is intended by explicit atheism ?  
 490. What is meant by constructive atheism ?  
 491. Against whom may a charge, similar to that against Epicurus, be fairly brought ?  
 492. What is meant by practical atheism ?  
 493. What does this precept forbid, in the second place ?  
 494. When was Polytheism introduced, and how far has it prevailed ?  
 495. What relation to Polytheism did the calling of Abraham out of his native country sustain ?  
 496. What does history inform us concerning the number of false gods worshiped by heathen nations ?  
 497. What system of Polytheism prevailed in ancient Egypt ?  
 498. What kind of Polytheism prevailed among other ancient nations ?  
 499. What is the state and extent of Polytheism at the present time ?  
 500. What other variety of Polytheism may be noticed as condemned by the First Commandment ?  
 501. What was the influence of ancient legislators and philosophers in relation to this idolatrous and immoral system ?  
 502. What moral, or rather, what immoral effects have been produced by a departure from this fundamental law of the Creator ?  
 503. What then is to be thought of the criminality of Polytheism ?  
 504. What effects might be expected from Atheism or Polytheism, should they become universal ?  
 505. What inference in favor of God's revealed law may be deduced from the foregoing facts and statements ?  
 506. Does the prohibition of the first precept extend no further than to the adoration of pagan divinities or idols ?  
 507. What, according to St. Paul's instructions, is the root and essence of idolatry ?  
 508. What do we learn concerning idolatry from St. Paul's letters to the Colossians and Ephesians ?  
 509. What three prominent idols have been introduced from heathen into Christian lands ?  
 510. What other kind of worship is prohibited in this commandment ?  
 511. Do not Romanists make certain distinctions, in regard to the kind of worship paid by them to saints and angels, which exculpate them from the charge of idolatry ?  
 512. What plea is set up in favor of the worship of the Virgin Mary and other saints ; and how is it proved to be insufficient ?  
 513. Having considered the acts which are prohibited, what are the acts which are virtually required in the precept, "Thou shalt have no other gods before Me ?"

#### THE SECOND COMMANDMENT.

*"Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is on the earth beneath, or that is in the waters under the earth ; thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them."*

514. THE first precept declares the proper object of worship : the second prescribes the proper *means*, forbidding the use of images, and, consequently, of every other form of worship which has not been appointed by God. The first, binds us to acknowledge and worship Jehovah, as the *true God* ; the second, binds us to the *true worship of that God* : it binds us *not to worship him under any visible resemblance or form*.

515. The terms “graven image,” and “likeness,” here employed, unquestionably denote every external representation of visible or invisible objects as objects of worship, or for religious purposes.

516. Although the Jews have generally so regarded this precept, as forbidding the practice of the arts of sculpture and painting, and have regulated their practice accordingly, it will be seen, by examining the connection in which this precept stands, and other instructions of like nature in the Bible, that the use of these arts is only prohibited when designed for religious purposes; as supposed auxiliaries to devotion. Consult, for instance, Exodus xx. 4, 5; Deut. iv. 15–18; xxvii. 15.

It is no transgression of this precept to form representations of terrestrial or celestial objects for amusement and ornament; or to preserve the memory of the dead, and to do honor to those who deserve well of their country, or of mankind. If the design of the precept be considered, which is manifest from its connection, it will be found to relate solely to religion, and to condemn images or likenesses, whether engraven or drawn with the pencil, only when they are made the objects or the means of worship.

Moses received orders to construct in carved work the figures of the cherubim over the ark of the covenant; and also to form a brass image of a serpent: and Solomon was commanded also to employ the arts of sculpture and painting upon the temple. But none of these productions of art constituted emblems or representations of the Deity.

#### I.—*Prohibition in this Commandment.*

517. It condemns *all outward representations of God*. In consequence of the idolatrous tendency of human nature, when God manifested himself on Mount Sinai, it was in such a manner that no future representation could be made by sculpture or painting. “The Lord spake unto you out of the midst of the fire: *ye heard the voice of the words, but saw no similitude*; only ye heard a voice.”

The second precept, like the former, might, at first sight, appear to be unnecessary, if the almost universal practice of mankind had not taught us that there is no



disposition which the human mind is more apt to indulge than to endeavor to bring the invisible and incomprehensible Divinity within the range of our senses, and to contemplate him as one like ourselves.

518. The Divine Being fills the immensity of space with his presence, and cannot be represented by a figure confined to a particular place. He is an invisible and spiritual Being, possessing the attributes of omnipotence, and of infinite wisdom and goodness. What madness is it to imagine that any configuration of matter bears a resemblance to a being who has no bodily parts, or can aid in furnishing just conceptions of a being so incomprehensibly great and glorious as Jehovah, the Creator of the universe of matter and mind !

Even the sun himself, with all his immensity of splendor, would form but a poor and pitiful image of Him whose breath has kindled ten thousand times ten thousand suns. How much less can a block of marble, or a stupid ox, shadow forth the glories of the King eternal, immortal, and invisible !

We are unable, indeed, at best, to speak or think worthily of Him : and we cannot well avoid using some of the same phrases, concerning him and his actions, which we do concerning the parts and motions of our own bodies. But we can very well avoid making sensible images or pictures of him, and the plainest reason teaches that we ought to avoid it, because they lower and debase men's notions of God ; lead the weaker sort into superstitious and foolish apprehensions and practices ; and provoke those of better abilities, from a contempt of such childish representations, to disregard and ridicule the religion that adopts them.

519. In the early ages of the world, says Archbishop Secker, many of the heathens themselves had no images of the Deity : particularly the ancient Persians had none. Nor had the first Romans ; Numa, their second king, having, as the philosopher Plutarch, himself a Roman magistrate, though a Greek by birth, informs us, " forbidden them to represent God in the form either of a man, or of any other animal. And, accordingly, he says, they had neither any painted or engraved figure of him for one hundred and seventy years ; but temples, void of any image of any shape ; thinking it impious to liken a

superior nature to inferior ones; and impossible to attain the notion of God otherwise than by the understanding."

Varro, a most learned ancient Roman author, is quoted to the same effect; and then remarks the archbishop, "so much wiser were these *heathen Romans*, than the *Christian Romans* now are."

But when some of the eastern kingdoms had fallen into this corruption, particularly the Egyptians, who claimed the invention as an honor (*Herodotus*, l. ii. § 4), the great care of God was to preserve or free his own people from it, by issuing the precept now under consideration.

520. The principal reason, perhaps, why any representation of God is forbidden in this precept, is, that *whenever such a practice commences, it infallibly ends in adoring the image itself*, instead of the object it was intended to represent; or, in other words, the breach of this commandment uniformly leads, in most cases, to a breach of the first.

521. Some have maintained that the second precept only forbids the making, and worshiping, the representations of *false gods*; but this is not a correct view of the subject. It clearly forbids the use of all sensible representations not only of false gods, but of the true God. See Deuteronomy, iv. 12–15, 16. Beside this proof, when the Israelites made a golden calf, about the time of the delivery of the law, though evidently their design was to represent by it, not a false object of worship, but Jehovah, who brought them up out of the land of Egypt; they are charged with a most heinous offense, and severely punished; and in the book of Acts, vii. 41, this offense is stigmatized as idolatry. It is remarkable that the feast which they proclaimed is called by them a feast to Jehovah.

Again, in after-times, when the kings of Israel set up the same representation of the same true God, at Dan and Bethel, the Scripture invariably speaks of it as the leading sin from which all the rest of their idolatries proceeded; for, from worshiping the true God by an image, they soon came to worship the images of false gods too, and thence fell into all sorts of superstition and wickedness.

Yet the church of Rome maintains that we may now very lawfully and commendably practice what the

Jews were forbidden to do. But, in opposition to this sentiment, let it be observed, that not only the Jews, but the heathens also, who never were subject to the law of Moses, are condemned in Scripture for this mode of worship; as in Romans, the first chapter, and in Acts xvii. 29, 30, where it is said—"Forasmuch, then, as we are the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Godhead is like unto gold, or silver, or stone, graven by art and man's device. And the time of this ignorance God winked at, but now commandeth all men everywhere to repent."

522. The folly of making images or pictures of Christ is evident, because they are not true representations of the object, and have their origin solely in the imagination of the statuary or painter. The only account which antiquity has transmitted to us of the personal appearance of our Savior is of altogether doubtful authority. Beside this, however, there are more serious objections to such representations.

523. The prohibition extends yet further. On the principle already explained, that when one species of a sin is forbidden, all the other species of the same sin are forbidden, the prohibition in the second precept must extend to all superstitious usages and mere human inventions in the matter of divine worship. The design of the prohibition seems to have been, to establish this principle, that as God is the sole object of religious worship, so it is his prerogative to dictate the mode of it. To the mind of man, blinded as it is by depravity, and misled by the imagination and the passions, observances might recommend themselves by the pretext of fitness and decency, which the Supreme Being would reject as unworthy of his nature and character. Deut. xii. 30—"What thing soever I command you, observe to do it: thou shalt not *add* thereto, nor *diminish* from it."

524. The only NATURAL IMAGE or representative of God, which is set before us for our contemplation, is *the boundless universe* which his hands have formed; and his MORAL IMAGE is displayed in the *laws* which he has published, in the *movements of his providence*, and in *the face of Jesus Christ, his Son*, who is "*the image of the invisible God, and the brightness of his glory.*"

All these exhibitions of the Divine Majesty we are commanded to contemplate; and it is requisite to our obtaining

the most full and comprehensive views of the object of our adoration, that no one of these displays of God should be overlooked. It may be admitted as an axiom, both in natural and revealed theology, that our conceptions of God will nearly correspond with the conceptions we acquire of the nature and extent of his operations. In the immense universe which he has opened to our view, assisted by the most powerful telescopes, he has given us an image of his infinity—an infinity of power, of wisdom, and of benevolence.

And hence the great mass of Christians may almost be regarded as half-idolators, for want of those expanded conceptions of God, which a knowledge of his works is adapted to afford.

It was chiefly owing to such criminal inattention to the displays of the divine character in the works of creation, that the inhabitants of the pagan world at first plunged themselves into all the absurdities and abominations of idolatry.

“ In reason’s ear they all rejoice,  
And utter forth a glorious voice ;  
Forever singing, as they shine,  
‘ The hand that made us is divine.’ ”

But the heathen world did not listen to these instructions, and hence “ became wise in their imaginations, and their foolish hearts were darkened.” Wherefore they were given up by God to the indulgence of vile affections—to the worship and service of the creature, instead of the Creator, who is blessed forever.

And, even under the Christian dispensation, we have too much reason to fear that effects somewhat analogous to these have been produced, and a species of mental idolatry practiced by thousands, owing to their inattention to the grand visible operations of Jehovah, and to their not connecting them with the displays of his character and agency as exhibited in the revelations of his word.

## II.—*Requirements in the Second Precept.*

525. (1.) This precept requires us to entertain worthy ideas of God, as a spiritual Being, of whom no representation should be formed, either with the hand or by the imagination, and to honor him with spiritual worship, the worship of the understanding and affections.

(2.) In particular, it requires us to adhere to his own



institutions, in opposition to all human devices ; to receive them with due submission to his authority ; to observe them with outward reverence, and inward sentiments of devotion ; to maintain them in their purity and integrity, exactly as he has delivered them to us, neither adding to them, nor taking from them.

526. The *ordinances of religion* are, prayer, and praise, the preaching of Scripture truths, and the celebration of the sacraments of baptism and the Lord's supper : to these may be added, church government, the exercise of discipline, and other particulars which it is not necessary here to mention.

It is evident that while the prescribed forms of worship are to be punctually observed, the precept calls for those dispositions and exercises of mind of which they are significant, and which only can give them value, and render them acceptable to the omniscient God, who looks not upon the countenance, but upon the heart.

### III.—*Particular Sanction of this Precept.*

527. "*For I, the Lord thy God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generations of them that hate me ; and showing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments.*"

528. The considerations enforcing obedience to the precept, as here set forth, are, chiefly, a threatening of evil upon themselves and upon their posterity if they disobeyed it ; and a promise of liberal reward to those who should obey it.

There is some difficulty in coming to an exact conception of the import of the punishment here threatened ; and writers have differed much in their explanation of it.

It is to be observed, that no other sin but idolatry is threatened in this particular manner ; that the Jews were placed under a peculiar form of government, of which Jehovah was the civil as well as religious magistrate and king : that idolatry under that government, beside its moral enormity, was the highest civil offense, similar to high treason under other governments, and utterly subversive of the government unless restrained by suitable rewards and punishments ; that idolatry is an offense peculiarly contagious as well as demoralizing, as

the history of nations fully shows ; that it was proper for the King of Israel to make a strong appeal not only to personal interest, but to parental partialities in order to check so enormous an evil, by informing the Jews that not themselves only, but their descendants to the third and fourth generations, should feel the effects of divine displeasure, upon their perpetration of idolatry.

We have abundant proof, not only in the history of the Jews, but of other nations, that it is a principle of the divine administration so to order events in this life that effects of sin are not confined to the original perpetrator, but extend to his children, and to others connected with him ; and this probably is one of the most powerful means of discipline ; furnishing, as it does, the strongest imaginable motive to every man of common sensibility and benevolence, to pursue an upright and correct course of action, since not himself only, but others are to be materially affected by his line of conduct. It is supposed that the hereditary evils of idolatry are restricted to the third or fourth generation, because some transgressors might live to see the punishment inflicted to that extent, and we are more affected by what we see than by remote evils.

The limits of the promise of reward to the obedient are not so restricted ; they extend to the thousandth. The good conduct of Abraham, the pious ancestor of the Jews, was followed, in successive ages, by great blessings conferred, for his sake, upon his descendants.

On the whole, the sanction implies that not only personal, but domestic evils, for several generations, would be experienced, should the Jews fall into idolatry ; while great blessings, personal, domestic, and national, would be conferred upon those who continued to worship the true God, in a spiritual and affectionate manner ; not by the use of visible representations, which are an insult to the infinite one, a debasement of his character and worship, and a certain introducer of the crime of idolatry and of all its bad effects.

The history of the Jews, in subsequent periods, verifies the correctness of this exposition.

[Professor Dick's Lectures ; Archbishop Secker's Works ; Dick's Philosophy of Religion.]

514. How is the second distinguished from the first precept ?

515. What is to be understood by the terms "graven image," and "likeness," here employed ?

516. Does this commandment, as some suppose, forbid the practice of the arts of sculpture and painting?

517. What does this commandment prohibit?

518. What considerations show the reasonableness of this prohibition in the second precept, and the folly and absurdity of the practice against which it is directed?

519. What is known concerning the use of images among the early heathens?

520. What may be assigned as perhaps the principal reason why any representation of God is forbidden in this commandment?

521. Have not some maintained that the second precept only forbids the making and worshipping the representations of false gods; and is not this a correct view of the subject?

522. Is it proper to make representations of Jesus Christ?

523. Does the second precept virtually extend its prohibition to any thing beside visible representations of the true God?

524. What images are there of God, which we may legitimately employ as means of promoting a more just knowledge and worship of God?

525. What does this precept require?

526. What are the ordinances of religion which God has established; or what are the means, in the use of which He has authorized and commanded us to worship him?

527. In what words is the sanction of this precept conveyed?

528. Of what parts does this sanction consist, and what is its probable import?

#### THE THIRD COMMANDMENT.

*"Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain; for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain."*

529. *THE name* of any person is that which distinguishes him from other individuals; so the name of God is that which distinguishes him from other beings; as God, Lord, the Almighty, &c.

530. *To take* this name, is to use it in discourse; to take it *in vain*, is to use any of the titles or designations of the Divine Majesty, for trifling, vain, and evil purposes; it is also, to treat any displays of his character with levity, profaneness, or irreverence.

#### I. *The Nature and Lawfulness of Oaths.*

531. Oaths are one particular form of using the name of God; or the name of God is used in swearing by it. As a simple declaration may not be deemed sufficient, when the character of the speaker is unknown, his motives are suspected, or the matter is of too much importance to be lightly determined, men have been accustomed to demand the confirmation of it by an *oath*, that is, by an *appeal to God, as the witness of our veracity, and the Judge who will punish us if we are guilty of falsehood.*

532. Some have denied the lawfulness of an oath, and have affirmed that it is sinful to swear upon any occasion ; but the following arguments may be adduced in refutation of this opinion :—

(1.) Among the Israelites, the custom of swearing upon solemn occasions existed, and is constantly taken for granted in the Old Testament. Oaths are there commanded as a part of the usual judicial procedure ; thus, Exodus xxii. 11, “If a man deliver unto his neighbor, &c., *then shall an oath of the Lord be between them both.*”

(2.) The Scriptures give directions how to swear, viz., in truth, judgment, and righteousness.

(3.) In Psalm xv. 4, it is mentioned among the characters of a good man, that *he sweareth to his hurt, and changeth not.*

(4.) The denunciation of God’s anger against *false* swearing, implies a sanction of swearing, when truly employed.

(5.) We cannot suppose God to disapprove of the practice, when he is repeatedly represented as himself having sworn an oath to Abraham, to David, and to the people of Israel on various occasions.

(6.) The command, “Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God *in vain*,” implies that the name might be used on fitting and important occasions ; and the command is adapted to keep up the solemn reverence for the thought of God, which an oath implies.

(7.) If it be objected, that what was tolerated under the old dispensation, has been prohibited under the new, it is to be observed that there are *good examples of swearing, on important occasions, to be found in the New Testament, as well as in the Old.*

When Paul says, “I call God for a record upon my soul :” “God is my witness :” “I say the truth in Christ, I lie not, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Ghost,” his language, in all these instances, and particularly in the last two, amounts to an oath.

Our Savior recognized the lawfulness of an oath, when one having been administered to him, according to the form of his country, he broke the silence which he had hitherto observed, and answered the question of the high priest. Matt. xxvi. 63.

It is impossible to understand the words of the apostle



in any other way than as a sanction of the practice, when he says, "Men verily swear by the greater, and an oath for confirmation is an end of all strife."

533. A difficulty here occurs. Our Savior (Matt. v. 34) says, "Swear not at all," and the apostle James reiterates the same prohibition. But it is a misapprehension of our Savior's words to consider them as an absolute prohibition of an oath; because it is plain, from his own illustration, that he meant only to forbid the practice of swearing in common conversation, and particularly of swearing by creatures. The forms of swearing mentioned, were not used in judicial swearing, or in civil courts; and hence our Savior must refer to swearing on common occasions, without necessity, without reverence for God.

As with regard to retaliation, to divorce, to honoring of parents, to angry expressions, the Jewish teachers had made subtle distinctions as to what was and was not a transgression of the law, while they had neglected the spirit of the law; so with regard to swearing. The trivial and thoughtless use of forms of swearing had become common, and the teachers had laid down rules as to which of these forms were binding, and which were not so. In this, as in the other cases, Christ rejects these distinctions, and says of *such* cases (Matt. v. 34), "I say unto you, swear not at all." That this is the import of his words is plain from the course of teaching in this place. He had said, "Think not that I am come to destroy the law and the prophets;" but he would have been engaged in destroying them if he had forbidden judicial oaths, for the law enjoined them, as we have seen.

[See Whewell's Elements of Morality.]

534. The inquiry here must be answered, When may an oath be administered, and how should it be taken? We answer—

(1.) An oath should be *sworn* only on such occasions as call for this solemnity,—about matters of importance, and with respect to which satisfaction cannot be otherwise obtained. God is too great and awful a being to be appealed to as a witness for every trifling purpose.

(2.) An oath should be *taken* with external and internal reverence, and be regarded not as a mere ceremony, but as a religious institution, which places us

in the immediate presence of the Judge of men and angels.

(3.) *We should be fully acquainted with the subject of an oath*; for to swear to anything of which we are ignorant, or about which we are in doubt, is at once to deceive men, and to set at naught the divine omniscience.

(4.) *We should take an oath according to the obvious meaning of it*, in the sense in which it is understood by those who administer it, to the exclusion of all private interpretations, and all mental reservations.

(5.) *We ought to be sincere in giving a promissory oath*, having a fixed intention to perform what we pledge ourselves to do, and never thinking ourselves released from the obligation, except by such a change of circumstances as renders it physically impossible to redeem our pledge, or would make it sinful to do so, because some other duty of paramount authority has intervened. It is plain, therefore, that *we should never bind ourselves by oath to do anything which we know to be morally wrong*, anything which would impede our duty to God, or to such of our fellow-men as have a prior claim to our service and obedience.

## II.—*Prohibitions in this Precept.*

535. (a.) The first and highest offense against this precept is *perjury*: when we swear by the name of God *falsely*. For vanity, in Scripture, frequently means something which is not what it would appear; and hence, using God's name, *in vain*, or to vanity, principally signifies, *applying it to confirm a falsehood*. Doing this deliberately is one of the most shocking crimes of which we can be guilty. For taking an oath is declaring solemnly, that we know ourselves to be in the presence of God, and Him to be witness of what we speak: it is appealing to Him, that our words express the very truth of our minds, and renouncing all title to his mercy, if they do not. In other sins, men endeavor to forget God; but *perjury* is daring and braving the Almighty to his very face; bidding him take notice of the falsehood we utter, and do his worst.

536. We commit perjury, (1.) if ever we swear that we do not know or believe what indeed we do; or that we do know or believe what indeed we do not; if ever,

being under oath, we mislead those whom we ought to inform; and give any other than the most exact and fair account that we can, of any matter concerning which we are examined.

(2.) We commit perjury, if we promise, under oath, to do a thing, without firmly designing to do it; or if we promise not to do a thing, without firmly designing to abstain from it. Nay, further: provided the thing which we promise be lawful, if we do not ever after take all the care that can reasonably be expected to make our promise good, we are guilty of perjury, and of living in it, so long as we live in that neglect.

If, indeed, a person has sworn to do what he thought he could do, and it proves afterward, unexpectedly, that he cannot, he is chargeable only with mistake, or inconsiderateness at most.

(3.) If we either promise, or threaten, anything which we cannot lawfully do, the making of such a promise is a sin, but keeping it would be another, perhaps a greater sin; and, therefore, it innocently may, and in conscience ought to be broken; but if we have promised what we may lawfully, but only cannot conveniently perform, we are by no means on that account released from our engagement; unless either we were unqualified to promise, or the person to whom we have engaged voluntarily sets us at liberty; or the circumstances of the case be plainly and confessedly such, that our promise was not originally designed to bind us in them.

537. Enough has been said to show that perjury is the most direct and gross affront to God, for which reason it is forbidden in the first table of the law; but beside this, it inflicts the greatest injury upon our fellow-creatures, on which account it is prohibited in one of the laws of the second table.

If persons will assert falsely, upon oath, no one knows what to believe; no one's property, or life, is safe; no one can know whom to trust; all security of government and of human society, all mutual confidence in trade and commerce, in every relation and condition, is utterly at an end. With the greatest reason, therefore, are perjured wretches abhorred of all the world.

No interest of our own, no kindness or compassion for other persons; no turn or purpose whatever to be

served by it, can ever justify our swerving at all from truth, either in giving evidence, or in entering into engagements. Nor must we think, in such cases, to come off with equivocations, evasions, and quibbles, and imagine it innocent to deceive in this way.

*One thing more should be added here*, for it cannot well be mentioned too often, that next to false swearing, *false speaking and lying*, whether in what we assert, or what we promise, is a grievous sin, and hateful to God and man; though we do not call on our Maker to be witness, yet he is a witness of whatever we say, and it is presumptuous wickedness to utter an untruth in the presence of *the God of truth*. It is also at the same time very hurtful to other persons, and very foolish with respect to ourselves.

538. (b.) This precept is violated not only by false swearing, or perjury, but in other ways: as when we *swear implicitly*, without knowing beforehand the nature and extent of the obligation, as in the case of Jephthah; when we *swear lightly and irreverently*, using the name of God with as little respect as we would show to that of a man; when we do not regard the mind or obvious intention of the imposer of the oath, but substitute a meaning of our own as a subterfuge under which we may escape from the understood obligation; when we swear to what we know to be impossible, or what we know to be sinful; when we swear, in doubt with respect to the practicability or the lawfulness of the action to which we bind ourselves; when we swear to release ourselves from a previous obligation, as some of the Jews professedly devoted their property to God, that they might be relieved from the duty of supporting their parents.

539. (c.) Another way of taking God's name in vain is, *when we swear by it needlessly, though it be not falsely*; for this also the words *in vain* signify.

(1.) One way of doing so, is by *rash and inconsiderate* vows; for a vow, being a promise made solemnly to God, partakes of the nature of an oath. There may sometimes be good reasons for entering into such an engagement; but vowing to do what there is no use of doing, is trifling with our Creator. Making unlawful vows, is directly telling him we will disobey him. Making such as are difficult to keep, is leading ourselves into temptation;



and, indeed, making any without much thought and prudent advice first, usually proves an unhappy snare. The vow of entire consecration to God, however, should be made and observed by all; and that comprehends all that can lawfully be made.

(2.) Another very needless, and always sinful use of God's name, is by *oaths in common discourse*. Too many are there who fill up with them a great part of their most trifling conversation, especially in their animated moods of feeling.

Now it is unavoidable, that *persons who are perpetually swearing must frequently perjure themselves*. But were that not the case, it is great irreverence, upon every slight thing we say, to invoke God for a witness, and mingle *his holy and reverend name* with the most idle things that come out of our mouths.

*And what makes this practice the more inexcusable*, is, that we cannot have either any advantage from it, or any natural pleasure in it. Generally, it is nothing more than a silly and profane custom, inconsiderately taken up; and there are the strongest reasons for laying it down immediately.

540. Beside what have been mentioned, there are other considerations, which evince the *folly and criminality of profane swearing*.

(1.) It causes us to be disliked and abhorred by all good persons, and even by all persons of good-breeding only; and it scarcely recommends us to the vicious generally.

(2.) No person is the sooner believed for his frequent swearing in conversation: on the contrary, a modest and serious affirmation is always much more regarded.

(3.) If swearing be affected as becoming, it is certainly quite otherwise, in the highest degree. The very phrases used in it, as well as the occasions on which they are used, are almost constantly absurd and foolish; and surely profaneness can never lessen the folly.

It is also acknowledged to be disrespectful to the company in which they are used: and if regard to their earthly superiors can restrain persons from swearing, why should not the reverence, due to our heavenly Father, do it much more effectually.

(4.) The indulgence of this vicious habit wears off, by

degrees, all sense of religion, and of everything that is good.

*A King reproved for Profane Swearing.*

541. A king was riding along in disguise, and seeing a soldier at a public door, stopped and asked the soldier to drink with him, and while they were drinking the king swore. The soldier said, "I am sorry to hear young gentlemen swear." His majesty took no notice, but swore again. The soldier said, "I'll pay part of the pot, if you please, and go, for I so hate swearing that if you were the king himself I would tell you of it." "Should you, indeed?" said the king. "I should," said the soldier. A while after, the king having invited some lords to dine with him, the soldier was sent for, and while they were at dinner he was ordered into the room to wait a while. Presently the king uttered an oath; the soldier immediately, but modestly said, "Should not my lord and king fear an oath?" The king, looking first at the soldier, said: "There, my lords, is an honest man; he can respectfully remind me of the great sin of swearing, but you can sit and let me stain my soul by swearing, and not so much as tell me of it."

542. In view of such kind of swearing, the language of the great teacher is: "But I say unto you, Swear not at all: neither by heaven, for it is God's throne; nor by the earth, for it is his footstool: neither by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the Great King: neither shalt thou swear by thy head, for thou canst not make one hair white or black. But let your communication be yea, yea; nay, nay: for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil."—Matt. v. 34–36.

That is, avoid, not only the grosser oaths, but all the silly refinements and softenings of them, which men have contrived, in hope to make them seem innocent: for, though the name of God be not expressed, yet, if it be implied by mentioning something relating to God, instead of himself; indeed, whatever form is used, the intent is the same, and it will have the effect of bringing into familiarity and contempt a sacred obligation.

It appears that such oaths as our Savior specified above were frequent among the Jews; and our Lord, in forbidding these, condemns all similar oaths, such as

those which are current among Christians who swear by their faith, their truth, their conscience, and, in popish countries, by the saints.

There are occasions upon which it is right and dutiful in us to use an oath, as we have shown; but in our daily talk with each other, it is our Savior's peremptory precept, *Swear not at all*; and it is a rule so evidently right and important, that even heathens have strictly enjoined and followed it, to the shame of too many who call themselves Christians.

543. (*d.*) A crime, similar to that of common swearing, is committed when men utter impious and horrid *imprecations* or *curses* upon themselves or upon others; or, on the other hand, when, without the slightest feeling of devotion, they call upon Him to bless, preserve, or help them. To wish the heaviest judgments of God, and even eternal damnation to a person, on the slightest cause, or none at all; to wish the same to ourselves, if some trifling thing that we are saying be not true, which frequently, after all, is not true, amounts to the most desperate impiety, if men, using this language, consider what they say. And though they do not, it is even then thoughtlessly treating God, and his laws, and the awful sanctions of them, with contempt; and blotting out of their minds all serious regard to subjects that will one day be found most serious things.

544. (*e.*) Beside the offenses already mentioned, this precept forbids all indecent and unfit use of God's name, the name of Christ, or of the Holy Ghost, in our discourse, though it be not in swearing or cursing; all accusations of Providence; all reflections against Scripture, and all contempt and ridicule with a view of undermining its divine authority; all dishonorable thoughts of God, and all sneering at his public or private worship, and at the religious ordinances he has appointed; all irreverent and flippant sayings concerning God's nature and attributes, his actions and commands. *In short, it forbids the profanation or abuse of anything by which he has made himself known.*

545. (*f.*) The treatment of Christianity in the writings and discourse of many of its adversaries, can be regarded in no other light than as a gross violation of the Third Commandment.

While we would have freedom of inquiry restrained by no laws but those of decency, *we are entitled to demand, on behalf of a religion which holds forth to mankind assurances of immortality, that its credit be assailed by no other weapons than those of sober discussion and legitimate reasoning*: that the truth or falsehood of Christianity be never made a topic of raillery, a theme for the exercise of wit: that the cause be tried upon its merits: that all attempts to preoccupy, ensnare, or perplex the judgment of the reader by any art or influence, extrinsic to the proper grounds upon which his assent ought to proceed, be rejected from a question which involves in its determination the hopes, the virtue, and the repose of millions: that the controversy be managed on both sides with sincerity; that is, that nothing be produced, in the writings of either, contrary to, or beyond the writer's own knowledge and persuasion: that objections and difficulties be proposed from no other motive, than an honest and serious desire to obtain satisfaction, or to communicate information which may promote the discovery and progress of truth.

546. We shall now show in what an opposite and profane manner the Christian religion has been treated by its adversaries.

(1.) By *one unbeliever*, all the follies which have adhered, in a long course of dark and superstitious ages, to the popular creed, are assumed as so many doctrines of Christ and his apostles, for the purpose of subverting the whole system by the absurdities which it is *thus* represented to contain.

(2.) By *another*, the ignorance and vices of the sacerdotal order, their mutual dissensions and persecutions, their encroachments upon the intellectual liberty and civil rights of mankind, have been displayed with no small triumph and invective; not so much to guard the Christian laity against a repetition of the same injuries (which is the only proper use to be made of the most flagrant examples of the past), as to prepare the way for an insinuation that the religion itself is nothing but a profitable fable, imposed upon the fears and credulity of the multitude, and upheld by the frauds and influence of an interested and crafty priesthood. And yet how remotely is the character of the clergy connected with Christianity!



What, after all, does the most disgraceful page of ecclesiastical history prove but that the passions of our common nature are not altered or excluded by distinctions of name, and that the characters of men are formed much more by the temptations than the duties of their profession?

(3.) A *third* finds delight in collecting and repeating accounts of wars and massacres, of tumults and insurrections excited in almost every age of the Christian era by religious zeal: as though the vices of Christians were parts of Christianity; as though intolerance and extirpation were precepts of the Gospel; or as if its spirit could be judged of from the counsels of princes, the intrigues of statesmen, the pretenses of malice and ambition, or the unauthorized cruelties of some gloomy and virulent superstition.

(4.) By a *fourth*, the succession and variety of popular religions; the vicissitudes with which sects and tenets have flourished and decayed; the zeal with which they were once supported, the negligence with which they are now remembered; the little share which reason and argument appear to have had in framing the creed, or regulating the religious conduct of the multitude; the indifference and submission with which the religion of the state is generally received by the common people; the caprice and vehemence with which it is sometimes opposed; the phrensy with which men have been brought to contend for opinions and ceremonies, of which they knew neither the proof, the meaning, nor the original; lastly, the equal and undoubting confidence with which we hear the doctrines of Christ, or of Confucius, the law of Moses, or of Mohammed, the Bible, the Koran, or the Shaster, maintained or anathematized, taught or abjured, revered or derided, according as we live on this, or on that side of a river; keep, or step over, the boundaries of a state: points of this sort are exhibited to the public attention, as so many arguments against the *truth* of the Christian religion—and with success. For these topics being brought together, and set off with some exaggeration of circumstances, and with a vivacity of style and description common enough to the writings and conversation of free-thinkers, insensibly lead the imagination into a habit of classing Christianity with the delusions that have taken

possession, by turns, of the public belief; and into a habit of regarding it, as what the scoffers of our faith represent it to be, *the superstition of the day*.

But is this to deal honestly by the subject, or with the world? May not the same things be said, may not the same prejudices be excited by these representations, whether Christianity be true or false, or by whatever proofs its truth be attested? May not truth as well as falsehood be taken upon credit? May not religion be founded upon evidence accessible and satisfactory to every mind competent to the inquiry, which yet, by the greatest part of its professors, is received upon authority?

547. *Infidelity is served up in every shape* that is likely to allure, surprise, or beguile the imagination; in a fable, a tale, a novel, a poem; in interspersed and broken hints; remote and oblique surmises; in books of travels, of philosophy, and natural history; in a word, in any form rather than the right one, that of a professed and regular disquisition.

And because the coarse buffoonery and broad laugh of the old and rude adversaries of the Christian faith would offend the taste, perhaps, rather than the virtue, of this cultivated age, a grave irony, a more skillful and delicate banter, is substituted in their place. An eloquent historian (Gibbon), beside his more direct, and therefore fairer, attacks upon the credibility of the evangelic story, has contrived to weave into his narrative one continued sneer upon the cause of Christianity, and upon the writings and characters of its ancient patrons. The knowledge which this author professed of the frame and conduct of the human mind, must have led him to observe, that such attacks do their execution without exciting inquiry. *Who can refute a sneer?* Who can compute the number, much less, one by one, scrutinize the justice, of those disparaging insinuations, which crowd the pages of this elaborate history (Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire)? What reader suspends his curiosity, or calls off his attention from the principal narrative, to examine references, to search into the foundation, or to weigh the reason, propriety, and force of every transient sarcasm, and sly allusion, by which the Christian testimony is depreciated and traduced; and by which, nevertheless, he may find his persuasion afterward unsettled and perplexed?

548. The enemies of Christianity have pursued her with poisoned arrows. *Obscenity itself is made the vehicle of infidelity.* The awful doctrines, if we be not permitted to call them the sacred truths, of our religion, together with all the adjuncts and appendages of its worship and external profession, have sometimes been impudently profaned by an unnatural conjunction with impure and lascivious images. The fondness for ridicule is almost universal; and ridicule, to many minds, is never so irresistible as when seasoned with obscenity, and employed upon religion. But in proportion as these noxious principles take hold of the imagination, they infatuate the judgment; for trains of ludicrous and unchaste associations adhering to every sentiment and mention of religion, render the mind indisposed to receive either conviction from its evidence, or impressions from its authority. And this effect being exerted upon the sensitive part of our nature, is altogether independent of argument, proof, or reason; is as formidable to a true religion as to a false one; to a well grounded faith, as to a chimerical mythology, or fabulous tradition. Neither, let it be observed, is the crime or danger less, because impure ideas are exhibited under a veil, in covert and chastised language.

549. Had Jesus Christ delivered no other declaration than the following: "The hour is coming, in the which all that are in the grave shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good unto the resurrection of life, and they that have done evil unto the resurrection of damnation," he had pronounced a message of inestimable importance, and well worthy of that splendid apparatus of prophecy and miracles with which his mission was introduced and attested; a message in which the wisest of mankind would rejoice to find an answer to their doubts, and rest to their inquiries.

It is idle to say, that a future state had been discovered already. He alone discovers, who *proves*; and no man can prove this point, but the teacher who testifies by miracles that his doctrine comes from God.

### III. *Beneficial Effects among Men of a Universal Observance of the Third Commandment.*

550. Universal and profound reverence of the name and character of God, would lead to the practice of all the duties of piety and morality. The whole earth would be consecrated as one grand temple, from which a grateful homage would ascend from the hearts and the lips of millions of devout worshipers in all places from the rising to the setting sun.

In the domestic circle, in the convivial meeting, in the public walks, in the councils of nations, and in every other intercourse of human beings, the name of God would never be mentioned, nor his character alluded to, but with feelings of profound and reverential awe. His holy word would be perused by all classes of men, with affection and delight, as the oracle which proclaims the glories of his nature, the excellence of his laws, the blessings of his salvation, and the path which conducts to eternal felicity in the life to come.

Such are some of the delightful effects which would follow, were a sentiment of profound reverence to pervade, as it should do, the whole mass of human beings; and corresponding sentiments of affection for each other, would be the necessary accompaniment of respect and veneration for their common Parent.

[Professor Dick's Lectures; Archbishop Secker's Works; Dick's Philosophy of Religion; Paley's Moral Philosophy; Whewell's Elements of Morality.]

529. What are we to understand by the name of the Lord?

530. What is meant by taking it in vain?

531. What are oaths, and what is their moral character?

532. What arguments may be used to establish the lawfulness of oaths when taken in a proper manner?

533. But there is a difficulty to dispose of. Does not our Savior say, Matt. v. 34, "Swear not at all;" and does not the apostle James reiterate the same prohibition?

534. When may an oath be administered, and how should it be taken?

535. What crime, chiefly, is prohibited in this precept?

536. Under what circumstances would we make ourselves guilty of the crime of perjury?

537. What gives to perjury its great criminality?

538. In what methods, secondly, is this precept violated with respect to swearing?

539. What crime, in the third place, is prohibited in this precept?

540. What considerations show the folly and criminality of profane swearing?

541. What illustrative anecdote may here be related?



542. In view of such kind of swearing, what does our Savior direct ?

543. What, in the fourth place, may be named as a crime similar to that of common swearing ?

544. What other practices may, in the fifth place, be regarded as coming within the spirit of the prohibition in this precept ?

545. In what modes have many of the adversaries of Christianity, as such, been guilty of a gross violation of the Third Commandment ?

546. In what opposite and profane manner have hostilities been waged by unbelievers against the Christian religion, which claims to be the product of divine wisdom and benevolence ?

547. But if the matter of these objections be reprehensible, as calculated to produce an effect upon the reader beyond what their real weight and place in the argument deserve, what is there also of management, of disingenuousness, and profaneness, in the form under which they are dispersed among the public ?

548. In what still more culpable and dishonorable method have some of the enemies of Christianity violated the Third Commandment ?

549. What does Dr. Paley say to that class of reasoners who affect to see but little in Christianity, even supposing it to be true ?

550. What are some of the beneficial effects which would result from a universal observance of the Third Commandment ?

#### THE FOURTH COMMANDMENT.

*"Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labor, and do all thy work ; but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God ; in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy man-servant, nor thy maid-servant, nor thy cattle, nor the stranger that is within thy gates : For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day : wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and hallowed it."*

#### I. Nature and Importance of this Precept.

551. THIS precept obviously enjoins the setting apart of one day in seven, as a day of rest from worldly labor, and as a portion of time to be devoted to the exercises of religion, and particularly to the public worship of God.

552. *If the worship of God were left at large to be performed at any time*, too many would be tempted to defer and postpone it, on one pretense or another, till at length it would not be performed at all.

Further, reason shows it to be requisite, and the experience of all ages proves it to be natural, that *as we are social creatures, we should be social in religion, as well as in other things*, and honor in common our common Maker.

Since, therefore, on these accounts, there must be public worship and instruction, it is not only expedient, but necessary that there should be, also, *fixed times appointed for it, by sufficient authority*. How much, and what time should be devoted to this purpose, every society must

have determined for itself, and would have found it hard enough to agree in such a determination, if God had given no intimation of his will in the case.

## II. *Origin and Date of the Sabbatical Institution.*

553. We are informed in the history of the Creation, that the Maker of the world, having finished his work in six days (which he could as easily have finished in one moment, had it not been prolonged for some valuable reason, probably for our instruction), *blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it*: that is, appointed every return of it to be religiously kept as a solemn memorial, that *of Him, and, therefore, to Him are all things* (Rom. xi. 36). The expression, “the Lord *rested* on the seventh day” from his work of Creation, does not imply fatigue, for “the Creator of the ends of the world fainteth not, neither is weary;” but the expression means, that having then finished the formation of the world, he ceased from it, and required men also to cease from their labors every seventh day, in memory of that fundamental article of all religion, that the heavens and earth were made, and therefore are governed, by one infinitely wise, powerful, and good Being. And thus was the *Sabbath*, which word means the day of rest, *a sign*, as the Scripture calls it, *between God and the children of Israel*: a mark to distinguish them from all worshipers of false deities.

554. *As an institution, the Sabbath consists of two parts*—the Sabbath, or holy rest; and the time or day set apart for it. We learn from Gen. ii. 2, 3, that God rested (sabbatized) on the seventh day; and that then he “*sanctified*,” or set that day apart, as the day for sabbatizing, “because that in it *He* had rested” (sabbatized). Hence the sabbatizing, or holy resting, is one part of the institution; and the particular day set apart for it, is another and a distinct part. So that although for sufficient reasons the day may be, and has been changed, as we shall show, from the seventh to the first day of the week, the Sabbath, as a season of sacred abstinence from worldly labor, may remain in all its original authority.

555. (1.) With respect to the date of the institution of the Sabbath, it is much the most natural to apprehend, that *this took place* at the time it is first mentioned; and when the *reason* or occasion of it first took place.

It is no wonder at all, and no good objection to this view of the subject, that in so short a history, notice should not be taken of the actual observation of it before the time of *Moses*; for notice is not taken of it during five hundred years after *Moses*. Yet we know, of a certainty, that in his time, at least, it was ordered to be observed, both in this Fourth Commandment, and in other parts of the law, which direct more particularly the manner of keeping it.

(2.) In confirmation of the idea that the Sabbath was appointed first, not in the time of *Moses*, but when the human family began, it may be observed that the Sabbath is spoken of in *Exodus* before the publication of the Decalogue, and is then mentioned, not as a new institution, but as one already known: "To-morrow is the rest of the holy Sabbath unto the Lord" (*Exod. xvi. 23*). Some indeed draw an opposite conclusion, and consider these words as the first intimation of the Sabbath; but they are obviously mistaken, because *Moses* appears only to remind them of it, as the reason of the injunction he had delivered to gather a double quantity of manna on the day preceding the Sabbath, since none would fall on that day. If the Sabbath had been a new institution he would naturally have forewarned them of its duties, whereas he confines himself to the simple subject of the manna, forewarning them not to expect it on that day, and therefore to collect and prepare, on the day before, as much as would suffice till the Sabbath was past.

(3.) It seems also to have been justly thought that the word with which the fourth precept begins supposes a prior knowledge of the law: "*Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy.*" It was an institution with which they were already acquainted; and they were called upon to keep in mind the sacred nature of the day, and to sanctify it with the greatest care, especially after this *republication of the precept*. It is probable that it had been much neglected in *Egypt*; and as the *Israelites* were there in a state of slavery, it is not likely that they had been permitted by their cruel taskmasters to rest one day in seven. Through the necessity of their circumstances, and their own indifference, the observance of it might have been in a great measure suspended, and this may be the reason why it was inculcated anew, and

their attention was so particularly called to it: "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy."

(4.) It has been justly observed that the division of time into weeks, which existed in the age of the patriarchs, cannot be satisfactorily accounted for, but by admitting the previous institution of the Sabbath; for the Creation was finished in six days, and if the seventh was not then sanctified, we cannot conceive how the ancients, the Greeks as well as Hebrews, came then to divide time by seven days, rather than by six, or eight, or ten.

### III.—*Universal Obligation of the Law of the Sabbath.*

556. We shall now undertake to show that the Deity appointed the Sabbath to be observed by all men, and not by the Jews only.

(1.) We have seen that it was instituted long before the Jews existed as a people, and of course could not be designed for them exclusively, but for other nations as well as for them.

(2.) If the Sabbath was good and needful for the Jews, it is equally good and needful for all other nations. It has been conclusively shown by writers on the Sabbath that there is a perpetual demand for the Sabbath, in the physical and moral nature, relations, and necessities of *man*, and therefore it was needed at the commencement of the race, and subsequently, and will be equally needed while the world stands, or while man occupies a place in it.

(3.) The grand and primary reason assigned for requiring its observance, applies to all mankind no less than to the Jews: that reason was, that the work of Creation might be commemorated, and that worldly labors should, for religious purposes, be suspended.

(4.) The institution of marriage is coeval with that of the Sabbath, and if the one is only a Jewish institution, so is the other. But they are both equally intended for all nations, and they are beneficial to all; and hence their obligation rests equally upon all mankind.

(5.) The law of the Sabbath is included among the ten moral precepts, and was engraved twice by God himself on tables of stone, whereas the laws that are regarded as peculiar to the Jewish economy were merely recited to Moses, and by him committed to writing. The other



nine precepts are indisputably binding on all men : the inference is fair that this precept is also binding.

(6.) The universal and perpetual obligation of the Sabbath seems to be incontestably shown in a single remark uttered by our Savior, "*The Sabbath was made for man.*" He does not say, it was made for the Jews, but for *man*. So long then, and wherever man exists, there it is his right, and privilege, and duty, to observe the Sabbath, provided that such an institution has been made known to him.

#### IV.—*Objections to this View of the subject.*

557. (1.) It is said that the fourth precept is a *positive*, rather than a *moral* precept ; while the other precepts are strictly *moral*, that is, founded upon the relations of mankind to God and to each other, and therefore perpetual.

558. *Answer.* So far as this law requires us to abstain from labor that we may worship God and meditate on his works, it is a strictly moral duty, growing out of our relations to God ; and though the proportion of time, and the particular day of the week, required to be thus occupied, could not be learned by studying our relations to God, and are therefore purely matters of divine appointment ; yet, since it was necessary, as we have shown, that the proportion and the day should be designated, and God has seen fit to make such a designation, the law has the same binding force as the other laws of the Decalogue.

As to the *day*, the law states that after every six days of labor, the seventh shall be sacred. Under the Jewish dispensation, and perhaps from the earliest period of the world, Saturday was the Sabbath ; but there is evidence that under the Christian dispensation, the next day was, by divine permission, set apart as the Sabbath ; and upon this arrangement, the spirit and letter of the law are as fully complied with, as under the previous arrangement ; for there is still the consecration of the seventh day, after six days of labor.

559. (2.) The favorite proof-texts of the opponents of the Sabbath are, Col. ii. 16, 17, " Let no man, therefore, judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of a holy day, or of the new moon, or of the *Sabbath days* ; which

are a shadow of things to come, but the body is of Christ ;” and Rom. xiv. 5, “One man esteemeth one day above another ; another esteemeth every day alike. Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind.”

560. These passages are quoted (says Mr. Phelps in his “Argument for the Sabbath”) as if they had reference primarily and especially to the question of the Sabbath as *now* agitated (1841). It is *assumed* that the meaning of the apostle is this :—“Let no man judge or censure you in regard to the observance of the old Jewish or seventh day Sabbath, or any of the other Jewish feasts or ceremonials ; for they are all only a shadow which is fulfilled in Christ, and are therefore now no longer obligatory. And, in respect to the observance of the first, or indeed, of any particular day, as Sabbath, one man esteemeth one day, as, for instance, the first, above another ; another esteemeth every day alike. Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind, and observe one day, or another, or none, as he chooses.”

561. Such is the *assumed meaning* of these passages ; for no argument is ever employed to *prove* it. But *such is not their real meaning*. So far from it, they either have *no* reference to the seventh or the first-day Sabbath, but only to the other Jewish festivals or Sabbaths ; or they declare, simply, that the *seventh-day* Sabbath is no longer obligatory, and they do it in circumstances which make it a virtual declaration that the Lord’s day, or first-day Sabbath, is obligatory.

Beside the ample proof of these assertions furnished in the conclusive argument of Mr. Phelps, it may be observed that the various things connected with the Sabbaths spoken of in these passages were of a ceremonial nature and connected strictly with the Jewish economy ; whence it is fair to infer that the Sabbaths were only those that were confined to that economy, and not the weekly Sabbath enjoined in the Fourth Commandment, and obligatory on men from the beginning.

In proof of this interpretation, it may further be observed that the Sabbaths, in common with the other things here spoken of, are represented as the *shadow of things to come*, at the advent of Christ, and to be fulfilled in him. But the weekly Sabbath mentioned in the Fourth Commandment was not a shadow of things *to come*, but of

*things past*, namely, the works of Creation, from which, on the seventh day of the world, the Almighty rested.

562. (3.) To prove that the Sabbath is an institution appointed for the Jews merely, we are referred to such passages as this (Ezek. xx. 12): "Moreover also I gave them my Sabbaths, *to be a sign between me and them*, that they might know that I am the Lord that sanctify them."

563. Respecting this passage it may be observed, that his giving them the Sabbath no more implies that it was a new and a merely national institution, than his giving them the other precepts supposes that they were not previously binding upon all men,—nothing more being meant in both cases than that they were published anew to them with peculiar circumstances of solemnity.

The Sabbath may be said to be a *sign*, because the celebration of it would henceforth serve, with their other religious rites, to distinguish them from the other nations of the world, and it was *enforced by a new reason*, taken from their recent redemption. "And remember that thou wast a servant in the land of Egypt, and that the Lord thy God brought thee out thence, through a mighty hand, and by a stretched out arm; therefore the Lord thy God commanded thee to keep the Sabbath day." If, indeed, the reason here assigned, and the immediate connection in which it stands, be compared with the reason offered in the parallel passage in Exod. xx., it will be apparent, that it is not assigned for the observance of a Sabbath as a divine institution, but for the extending of the privileges of the Sabbath to *servants*. In other words, the passage in Exodus quotes the reason for the observance of the *entire precept*: the passage in Deuteronomy quotes the reason for the observance of a *particular part* of the precept,—that which declares that servants shall enjoy the benefit of rest from labor on every seventh day. The benevolent conduct of Jehovah in redeeming the nation from the labors of a hard servitude, is employed as an argument for releasing (according to the law) their own servants from the labors customary on the six days of the week.

There is nothing, therefore, in this language, that reduces the fourth precept to the condition of a mere Jewish, ceremonial, temporary enactment. It must be

regarded as universal and permanent in the obligation of its observance.

*V. Change of the Sabbath from the Seventh to the First Day of the Week.*

564. Upon this article we differ, with regret, from a respectable denomination of Christians, who devote the seventh day of the week to public worship. The concession must be made, that, in arguing for the change of the Sabbath from Saturday to Sunday, from the seventh to the first day, we are able to produce no positive precept; but we consider the *example of the apostles, and of the primitive Church under their direction*, as of equal authority with a positive precept; because they were infallibly guided by the Spirit in all things relative to doctrine and worship.

565. There are certain facts related in the New Testament, which seem to us to show that the apostles and early Christians celebrated the first day of the week as the Sabbath.

(1.) Immediately after the resurrection of Christ, the disciples began to assemble on the first day of the week; and, by meeting repeatedly with them on that day, he gave countenance to the practice.

(2.) It was continued after his ascension, and after the descent of the Holy Ghost to lead them into all truth. Thus, at Troas, "when the disciples came together on the first day, to break bread, Paul preached to them;" Acts xx. 7: and the time of meeting is manifestly spoken of as the usual one.

(3.) On that day the Corinthians were commanded to "lay by them in store, as the Lord had prospered them," 1 Cor. xvi. 2; and it is reasonable to think that the first day was specified as the proper time to make collections for the poor, because it was consecrated to religious duties.

(4.) It is undoubtedly the same day to which the beloved disciple refers when he says, Rev. i. 10, "I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day;" the day which Jesus Christ peculiarly claimed as his own; or the first day of the week, which is consecrated to his honor. Ecclesiastical history shows that this day was intended.



(5.) *If the finishing of the works of Creation was a reason why the Lord blessed the seventh day and hallowed it, there is a reason at least equally strong for the consecration of the first day, on which our Savior rose from the dead.*

Then, the work of redemption was finished; and, on account of its greatness and glory, and the unspeakable benefits which it has procured to mankind, it is worthy to be held in perpetual remembrance. *The first day of the week is dedicated to the memory of the Resurrection*, by which God publicly testified that his incarnate Son “had finished transgression, and made an end of sin, and brought in an everlasting righteousness.” And as there will be no new work of the Almighty on earth, of superior or equal importance, the day will not be again altered, but kept sacred to the end of the world.

(6.) *Christ's example, as Lord of the Sabbath*, is proof that it was no part of his design to abolish the Sabbath, but to restore it to its original and true intent, and to change the day of its observance, so as to make it commemorative of his work of redemption. Previous to his death, Christ was in the regular and habitual observance of the seventh, as Sabbath day. Afterward, when, by his death and resurrection, the old dispensation was fully at an end, and the new one fully introduced, we never find him in the synagogue, or meeting with his disciples for religious purposes on that day. But he did meet with them for such purposes on the first day of the week, and in other ways he specially honored that day. He rose from the dead on that day.

[See Phelps on the Sabbath, pp. 118-123.]

#### VI. *How and when the Sabbath is to be Observed.*

To prayer; for the day that God has blest  
Comes tranquilly on with its welcome rest.  
It speaks of Creation's early bloom;  
It speaks of the Prince who burst the tomb.  
Then summon the spirit's exalted powers,  
And devote to Heaven the hallowed hours.

WARE.

566. The Fourth Commandment taught the Jews, and all other men, to abstain from ordinary worldly labor on that day: but several additional precepts were enjoined that were binding peculiarly upon the Jews as a nation. They were not to go out of their houses, or to take

journeys, except to a place of worship; and the distance to which, according to the Rabbis, they might lawfully go, was two thousand cubits, or about two thirds of an English mile, which is called, in the New Testament, a Sabbath day's journey. They were not to kindle a fire in their dwellings, that is, probably, for the purpose of preparing food. They once deemed it unlawful to defend themselves on the Sabbath; but experience made them change their opinion, although they continued to think it a sin to attack their enemies on that day.

567. A sober and candid comparison of the general character and spirit of the Jewish and Christian dispensations, would lead us to conclude that it is not our duty to be so strict as the Jews were required to be: yet the danger is, that we shall be less strict than the great objects of the Sabbath and the great interests of a future life demand.

So far as we can learn, from the conduct or the instructions of our Savior and his apostles, no work connected with worldly callings is allowable on the Sabbath, that may be deferred to another day; and no works but those of necessary benevolence—those necessary for the relief of suffering men and of suffering animals—those which we had no opportunity of doing before the Sabbath, and cannot, consistent with mercy or benevolence, postpone till the Sabbath is over.

568. The great *purposes of the Sabbath* seem to be *twofold*: that it should be a season for rendering due honor to God, as the Creator, Moral Governor, and Redeemer of the world; and that the best temporal and spiritual interests of mankind might be promoted on that day.

The first of these may be inferred from the fact that it was instituted immediately on completing the earth for the residence of man, and was appointed as a memorial of God's creative operations: under the New Testament dispensation, it became also a memorial of the acts by which was completed the glorious work of man's redemption; thus evidently being designed to lead men to a consideration and praise of the attributes of Jehovah as displayed in the works of Creation, of Providence, and Redemption.

The second of these designs, is inferred from the declaration of Christ, as Lord of the Sabbath, that "the Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sab-

bath," and the connection in which this was uttered, shows that the Sabbath was not to be observed with such strictness as to preclude those acts of labor which the good of men and lower animals imperiously required. Yet this language seems to imply that labor for other ordinary purposes remained equally under prohibition as it was by the law of Moses.

569. All buying and selling, settling accounts, and paying off wages, posting books, or writing letters of business, amusement, or friendship, visiting post-offices, and taking out letters and papers, all reading of other than religious books, or papers, or pamphlets, *all unnecessary conversation or thoughts about worldly affairs*, all kinds of worldly business, such as gathering harvests, cutting wood, loading or unloading of merchandise from vessels or other vehicles, all making up, assorting, distributing, or carrying of mails, all trifling visits, unnecessary journeys, all excursions and amusements—even though lawful on other days—all acts, in short, which are inconsistent with those duties of public and private worship, and spiritual improvement and usefulness, which are involved in keeping the day sacred to the Lord, violate his law.

570. This one sin of SABBATH-BREAKING HAS BEEN THE MOTHER OF THOUSANDS AND THOUSANDS OF CRIMES. Half the criminals whose lives pay the forfeit of their offenses, whether in Great Britain, or in this country, half the criminals who end their days on the gallows, *begin their career of wickedness with breaking the Sabbath*. By keeping away from church, they deprive themselves of all instruction; they gradually lose all knowledge and fear of God; they do not learn to pray for his help, and so they are left without help; temptation comes upon temptation; they fall from one wickedness to another; until at length, even in this world, justice overtakes them, and gives them over to a shameful death.

*Parliamentary Testimony in favor of the Sabbath.*

571. In 1838, when the claims of the Sabbath were investigated by the British parliament, a committee of that body received the following testimony from the Rev. David Ruel, who had been chaplain of prisons in London for twenty-eight years, and had under his spiritual care not less, probably, than one hundred thousand prisoners,

concerning whom he testifies as follows:—"I do not recollect a single case of capital offense where the party has not been a Sabbath-breaker; and, in many cases, they have assured me that Sabbath-breaking was the first step in the course of crime. Indeed, I may say, in reference to prisoners of all classes, that in nineteen cases out of twenty, they are persons who not only neglected the Sabbath, but all the other ordinances of religion."

This, and similar testimony, that might be derived from other chaplains, or keepers of prisons, goes to show the necessity for a Sabbath and for its religious observance; and also serves to confirm the arguments adduced for its primitive, and perpetual, and universal obligation.

*Wisdom and Benevolence shown in the Appointment of the Sabbath.*

572. When we consider the tyrannical dispositions which prevail among mankind, the powerful influence of avarice over the human mind, and the almost total absence of compassion toward suffering humanity, wherever such dispositions predominate, we cannot but admire the wisdom and the benevolence of the Creator in appointing a weekly jubilee for the rest and refreshment of laborers spent with toil.

On this day, the master has an opportunity of divesting his mind of worldly cares and anxieties; the servant of obtaining a respite from his toilsome employments; and laborers of every class, of enjoying repose in the bosom of their families.

"Hail, Sabbath! thee I hail, the poor man's day!"

Some are apt to regard the Sabbath as an obstruction to their worldly interests; they calculate how much labor has been lost by the rest of one day in seven, and how much wealth might have been gained had the Sabbath not intervened to interrupt their employments. But such calculations rest upon a short-sighted policy.

Experience shows that on the six days out of seven appointed for labor, all the operations requisite for the cultivation of the fields, and for the manufacture of every useful article for the comfort of mankind, can be performed with ease, and without the least injury to any class of men. And what more could be accomplished, although the Sabbath were converted into a day of labor?



Were this violation of the divine command to become universal, it might be shown that instead of producing an increase of wealth, it would infallibly produce an increase of toil and misery in relation to the great mass of mankind, without any corresponding pecuniary compensation : after a short time the wages of seven days would be reduced to what is now given for the labor of six.

573. As the Sabbath was appointed for the rest of *man*, so it was also mercifully appointed as a season of repose for the *inferior animals*, which labor for our profit. "In it thou shalt not do any work . . . nor *thy cattle*."

This injunction exhibits the compassionate care and tenderness of the Creator in a very amiable and impressive point of view. It shows us that the enjoyments of the lower ranks of sensitive existence are not beneath his notice and regard. He knew what degree of relaxation was needed by the laboring animals, and foresaw that the avarice and cruelty of man would endeavor to deprive them of it. He therefore secured to them, by a law which is to continue in force so long as the earth endures, the rest of one day in seven, in common with their proprietors and superiors. [See Article 578.]

*Medical Testimony in favor of the Sabbath.*

574. It is sufficient to adduce that only of the celebrated and very learned Dr. Parre, who, after a laborious practice of forty years in London, gave the following testimony in 1838, before a committee of the British parliament :—

"The use of the Sabbath, medically speaking, is that of a day of *rest*. It is a day of compensation for the inadequate restorative power of the body under continual labor and excitement. A physician always has respect to the restorative power, because, if once this be lost, his healing office is at an end. The ordinary exertions of man run down the circulation every day of his life; and the first general law of his nature, by which God prevents man from destroying himself, is the alternating of day with night, that repose may succeed action. But though night apparently equalizes the circulation well, yet it does not sufficiently restore its balance for the attainment of a long life. Hence one day in seven, by the bounty of Providence, is thrown in as a day of compensation, to perfect, by its repose, the animal system.

"The sabbatical institution is not simply a precept partaking of the nature of a political institution ; but it is to be numbered among the natural duties, if the preservation of life be admitted to be a duty, and the premature destruction of it a suicidal act. I have found it essential to my own well-being, as a medical man, to abridge my labors on the Sabbath to what is actually necessary. I have frequently observed the premature death of physicians from continued exertion. I have advised the clergyman, in lieu of his Sabbath, to rest one day in the week. I have seen many destroyed by their duties on that day. I would say further, that quitting the grosser evils of mere animal living from over-stimulation, and undue exercise of body, *the working of the mind in one continual train of thought*, is the destruction of life in the most distinguished classes of society, and that senators themselves need reform in that respect. I have seen many of them destroyed by neglecting this economy of life."

*Testimony of Lord Chief Justice Hale.*

575. His remarks are as follows :—" Be sure to spend the Lord's day entirely in those religious duties proper for it ; and let nothing but an inevitable necessity divert you from it. For, (1.) it is the best and most profitably spent time ; it is in order to the great end of your being in the world. (2.) It is in order to your everlasting happiness ; in comparison of which, all other kinds of business are idle and vain ; it is that which will give you the greatest comfort in your life, in your sickness, in your death, and he is a fool that provides not for that which will most certainly come. (3.) It is the most reasonable tribute imaginable unto that God, that lends you your time, and you are bound to pay it under all the obligations of duty and gratitude : and, (4.) it is that which will sanctify and prosper all the rest of your time and your secular employments : *I am not apt to be superstitious, but this I have certainly and infallibly found true, that by my deportment in my duty toward God in the times devoted to his service, especially on the Lord's day, I could make a certain conjecture of my success in my secular employments the rest of the week after : if I were loose and negligent in the former, the latter never succeeded well ; if strict, and conscientious, and watchful in the former, I was successful and*

*prosperous in the latter.* And this I do not say slightly, or inconsiderately; but upon a long and sound observation and experience."

*Testimony of God's Providence in favor of the Sabbath.*

576. He has borne such testimony in his word, and in his providence, that is, by his acts. "Then I contended with the nobles of Judah and said unto them, What evil thing is this which ye do, and profane the Sabbath day? Did not your fathers thus; and did not God bring all this evil upon us and upon this city?" "Yet ye bring more wrath upon Israel by profaning the Sabbath." Neh. xiii; Jer. xiii; Lev. xxxvi.

Concerning this matter Dr. Humphrey has well remarked:—"This crying national sin (with the single exception of idolatry) contributed more than any other, to bring wrath upon Israel, and to sweep them into captivity. Now the only question is, whether God regards Sabbath-breaking with equal displeasure in other nations. And why should he not? He is the same holy Being that he was three thousand years ago. The nature of sin is the same. The moral law, including the Fourth Commandment, is the same. Human obligation is the same. Nations are regarded and treated as moral persons now, just as the Jews were under their judges and kings; and national sins have the same tendency to sear the public conscience, and undermine the foundations of social order. Why then should not these sins be punished with divine retributions, equally terrible?"

"One of the first acts of avowed atheism in revolutionary France was to abolish the Christian Sabbath; and the Lord came out against her "with fire, and with his chariots like a whirlwind, to render his anger with fury, and his rebukes with flames of fire." Well appointed fleets and armies have often been discomfited in their offensive operations upon the Sabbath. Three remarkable instances of this occurred during our last war with Great Britain, in each of which the enemy was the assailant, and in each, met with a signal overthrow. In like manner, we believe, did almost every battle and skirmish during the war terminate, in the defeat of the party making the attack on the Sabbath day. Let politicians and historians ascribe all this to valor, or chance, or whatever else they

please, we shall still regard it, as no equivocal testimony of the anger of God against the despisers of his law.

“If from the sins and punishments of nations and armies on the Lord’s day, we pass to individual transgressors, we are brought to the same conclusion. Were a Howard to go through all the wards and dungeons of our prisons, and take down the honest confession of every wretched inmate, who can doubt that nine tenths of the whole number would put down their disregard to the Sabbath among the causes of their ruin ?

“We say little here of the multitudes who are suddenly hurried into eternity, in the very act of profaning the Sabbath. Thousands perish thus every year in all the glee and temerity of transgression.

“That there is nothing miraculous in any of the cases which have been mentioned, does not mitigate in the least against the position we have taken, unless it be proved that God cannot punish communities and individuals in any other way. But who will attempt to prove this ? Surely no one, so long as he is in his right mind. ‘God is governor among the nations,’ and he can never be at a loss how to employ natural agents and moral causes, either to chastise or utterly to destroy his enemies.”

### *Legislative Action.*

577. It should be directed to the encouragement and support of the sacred observance of the Sabbath ; and to the repeal of laws for the transportation of Sabbath mails, by which directly and indirectly so much desecration of the Lord’s day is produced. It behooves our rulers likewise to lend all the weight of their precepts and example to promote Sabbath observance among all classes of the people : for without it we cannot become that happy people, whom righteousness exalteth, and whose God is Jehovah.

### *VII. Class of Persons particularly addressed in this Commandment.*

578. It is *addressed primarily to each head of a household*. “Remember the Sabbath day, &c. ; in it *thou* shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy *son*, nor thy *daughter*,” &c.

“This part of the precept (says Professor Bush) goes not only to extend the obligation, but also to secure the



privileges of the Sabbath to every class and condition of men. The wife, indeed, is not mentioned, because she is supposed to be one with the husband, and as coöperating with him of course in carrying into execution every commandment of God. But the rest of the family, sons and daughters, male and female servants, are specified in such a way as to throw upon heads of families the responsibility of uniting *all* their household establishment in the due observance of the day.

“Whatever relief, refreshment, or rest, may be intended to be afforded by the institution, servants, and even cattle, are to be sacredly considered as entitled to its merciful provisions. It is, indeed, the destiny of man, that he should earn his bread by the sweat of his brow, but the Sabbath is graciously bestowed upon him as a relief from that destiny. His mental energy and bodily health are to be renewed by its leisure; and God, who has thus bestowed upon man the substantial blessing of a periodical cessation from toil, has decreed the same privilege to the menial classes and to the inferior animals.

“The domestic, on that day, should be released as far as possible from his ordinary labors, and the beast which has served us faithfully during the week, should not be deprived of his share of the general repose. Were this law but duly observed, the servants in many families could be spared that labor on the Sabbath which now too often prevents their attending to any religious duty. Nor would the use of horses for traveling so extensively disgrace our own and other Christian lands. Many a driver and ostler, who knows no cessation from his daily task, would be found frequenting the place of worship; and many a poor animal which now pants under the lash of the Sabbath, would then be permitted to recover strength for the ensuing six days of inevitable labor.

It was a pleasant morning, in the time  
When the leaves fall—and the bright sun shone out  
As when the morning stars first sang together—  
So quietly and calmly fell his light  
Upon a world at rest. There was no leaf  
In motion, and the loud winds slept, and all  
Was still. The laboring herd was grazing  
Upon the hillside quietly—uncall'd  
By the harsh voice of man, and distant sound,  
Save from the murmuring waterfall, came not  
As usual on the ear. One hour stole on,

And then another of the morning, calm  
 And still as Eden ere the birth of man.  
 And then broke in the Sabbath chime of bells—  
 And the old man and his descendants went  
 Together to the house of God. I join'd  
 The well-apparel'd crowd. The holy man  
 Rose solemnly, and breath'd the prayer of faith—  
 And the gray saint, just on the wing for heaven—  
 And the fair maid—and the bright-haired young man—  
 And the child of curling locks, just taught to close  
 The lash of its blue eye the while;—all knelt  
 In attitude of prayer—and then the hymn,  
 Sincere in its low melody, went up  
 To worship God.

The white-haired pastor rose  
 And look'd upon his flock—and with an eye  
 That told his interest, and voice that spoke  
 In tremulous accents, eloquence like Paul's,  
 He lent Isaiah's fire to the truths  
 Of revelation, and persuasion came  
 Like gushing waters from his lips, till hearts  
 Unus'd to bend were softened, and the eye  
 Unwont to weep sent forth the willing tear.  
 I went my way—but as I went, I thought  
 How holy was the Sabbath-day of God.

WILLIS.

#### VIII. *Consequences of a universal Violation of the Fourth Commandment.*

579. Let us suppose, for a moment, that the Sabbath, and its exercises, and its influences, were *universally abolished* from the civilized world, what would be the consequences?

The knowledge of the true God, which the Sabbath, more than any other means, has tended to perpetuate, would soon be lost, his worship abandoned, and religious and moral principle buried in the dust. In pagan countries, where the Sabbath is unknown, the true God is never adored, the soul of man is debased, and prostrates itself before the sun and moon, and even before demons, monsters, insects, reptiles, and blocks of wood and stone.

In France, where the Sabbath was, for a season, abolished, an impious phantom, called the Goddess of Reason, was substituted in the room of the eternal God; the Bible was held up to ridicule, and committed to the flames; man was degraded to the level of the brutes; and the cheering prospects of immortality were changed into the shades of an eternal night. Atheism, skepticism, and fatalism almost universally prevailed; the laws of morality were trampled under foot, and anarchy, plots,

assassinations, and legalized plunder became the order of the day.

With the loss of the knowledge of God, all impressions of the divine presence, and all sense of accountableness for human actions, would be destroyed. The restraints of religion, and the prospect of a future judgment would no longer deter from the commission of crimes; and nothing but the dread of the dungeon, the gibbet, or the rack, would restrain mankind from the constant perpetration of injustice and deeds of violence. The pursuit of the objects of time and sense, which can be enjoyed only for a few years, would absorb every faculty of the soul; and the realities of the eternal world would either be forgotten or regarded as idle dreams.

Were the Sabbath abolished, or were the law which enforces its observance to be reversed, man would be doomed to spend his mortal existence in an unbroken series of labors; his mental powers would languish, and his bodily strength would be speedily wasted. Habits of cleanliness, civility of deportment, and decency of apparel would by vast multitudes be disregarded, and the persons and habitations of the laboring classes would soon resemble in filthiness those of the degraded Hottentot. Their minds would neither be cheered with the prospect of seasons of stated repose in this world, nor of eternal rest and joy in the world to come.

#### IX. *Duty and Efficacy of Prayer.*

580. When defined with strictness, prayer is the supplicatory address of a creature to his Creator, in which he humbly entreats him to confer some blessing, to remove some present evil, or to defend him from future danger which he has reason to fear. It is usually understood, however, with greater latitude, and then comprehends adoration of the divine attributes, confession of sin, petition for mercies and blessings needed, and thanksgiving for favors received.

In the beautiful language of Hannah More, "Prayer is the application of want to Him who only can relieve it; the voice of sin to Him who alone can pardon it. It is the urgency of poverty, the prostration of humility, the fervency of penitence, the confidence of trust. It is not eloquence, but earnestness; not the definition of help-

lessness, but the feeling of it; not figures of speech, but compunction of soul. It is the 'Lord, save us, or we perish' of drowning Peter; the cry of faith to the ear of mercy."

581. Wherever the light of nature taught men to acknowledge the being of a God, to that God also it directed them to pray.

(1.) When one man desires to obtain anything of another, he betakes himself to entreaty: and this may be observed of mankind in all ages and countries of the world. Now, what is universal may be called natural; and it seems probable that God, as our Supreme Governor, should expect that toward himself, which, by a natural impulse, or by the irresistible order of our constitution, he has prompted us to pay to every other being on whom we depend. The same may be said of thanksgiving.

(2.) Prayer is likewise necessary to keep up in the minds of men a sense of God's agency in the universe, and of their own dependence upon him.

(3.) There must be allowed to be an efficacy or utility in prayer, or it would not seem to us to be a duty to pray. No one can feel prompted to pray who expects nothing from his prayers. The efficacy of prayer imports that we obtain something in consequence of praying which we should not have received without praying.

582. In the sacred scripture, prayer is inculcated in numberless instances, in the form of express precept, of examples, of parables, of promise, and of threatening, as must be familiar to every reader of the Scriptures.

#### *X. Objections to the duty of Prayer.*

583. It is said that since God knows what our wants are, it can serve no purpose to tell him concerning them, as if he needed information; and if he is a being of infinite benevolence, there is no occasion to make use of entreaties, and to fill our mouths with arguments, because his own nature will undoubtedly prompt him to promote the happiness of his creatures.

584. (a.) In answer to the first part of this objection we remark, that although prayer is certainly not necessary for the purpose of giving information to God, yet it does not follow, upon this concession, that it is superfluous, because *there may be other reasons of great importance for which it is required.*



585. (1.) It may be enjoined as the means of impressing our own minds more deeply with a sense of our wants, and of bringing them into that state in which alone it is proper that blessings should be bestowed upon us.

(2.) It may be enjoined to affect us more strongly with a feeling of our dependence upon God, and to express that feeling to others who witness our prayers, with a view to convince them and ourselves that the good things which we obtain do not come to us by chance, but by his appointment and agency.

(3.) We do not pray to inform God of our wants (says H. More), but to express our sense of the wants which He already knows. As He has not so much made his promise to our necessities as to our requests, it is reasonable that our requests should be made before we can hope that our necessities will be relieved. God does not promise to those who *want* that they shall "have," but to those who "ask."

586. (b.) To suppose, according to the second part of the objection, that His infinite goodness will prompt him to supply our wants without any solicitation on our part, is a hasty inference from a partial view of his character, and is contrary to the general analogy of his administration. The supposition proceeds upon the idea that benevolence is the only attribute of his nature, and that he is instinctively and necessarily impelled by it to communicate himself, as the sun necessarily gives us light, or a fountain pours out its contents.

But as God is possessed of other perfections, there may be *moral restraints upon his benevolence*: there may be reasons why it should not be exercised indiscriminately, and why the supplications of his creatures should precede the distribution of his gifts. The argument proves nothing by proving too much; for if we infer from his benevolence that there is no necessity for prayer, we might also infer that there is no necessity for means of any kind, and that all our wants will be supplied without labor. God, however, has not ordained that the earth should spontaneously yield its fruits, but has made its productions the reward of cultivation; and it is therefore conformable to the order of things that men should first ask, and then receive.

587. Another objection is derived from the wisdom

and immutability of God, and is thus stated: As God is an infallible judge of what is proper to be done, he surely will do it whether we ask him or not; and if he has determined that it is not proper, vain and presumptuous is the hope that we shall prevail upon him to alter his purpose by our importunity. In fewer words the objection is thus stated by Dr. Paley: "If what we request be fit for us, we shall have it without praying; if it be not fit for us, we cannot obtain it by praying."

588. Dr. Paley says that this objection admits of but one answer, namely, that it may be agreeable to perfect wisdom to grant that to our prayers, which it would not have been agreeable to the same wisdom to give us without praying for.

589. Professor Dick, in reply to the objection, remarks, (1.) that the argument from the wisdom of God, which, it is said, will lead him to do what is fit without being asked, establishes the very point which it is intended to disprove. There are many things, no doubt, which will advance his glory, and which he will therefore do independently of us; but the point now under consideration, is the communication of blessings to individuals, and the question is, whether it would be proper to bestow favors upon them, in all cases, without prayer?

We answer, that it would not be proper, because it would tend to cherish a spirit of impiety, to dissolve the moral relation of man to his Maker, to encourage the neglect of Him which is too natural, and the ingratitude which we so often display amid the most abundant tokens of his goodness. Would it be proper that a guilty man should be pardoned, who will not be at pains to implore the mercy of his Sovereign?

(2.) In regard to the immutability of God, we acknowledge that it would be vain to hope that we shall change his purpose by our entreaties. Our prayers are offered up with no such design. We do not conceive that there is any decree which must be reversed before they can be answered. If there is any case in which it is uncertain whether our wishes are in unison with the will of God, as when we pray for the recovery of others from sickness, our petitions are presented with this reservation. In other cases, we assume, upon the authority of his word, that He is ready to bestow blessings upon us,

and only waits till we have made our humble and earnest request. We do not call upon God to alter the established order of his administration, but to act conformably to it; and this is the order, as we are informed on the highest authority: "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek and ye shall find."

Now here is nothing to be changed; no new inclination to be excited in the Object of worship. It is agreeable to his character and his purpose to attend to the supplications of men, for he is described in his own word as the hearer of prayer. Whatever false notions the ignorant may entertain of God, as if he resembled a man, whose judgment may be convinced by arguments, and whose affection may be gained over to those whom he has formerly regarded with aversion; true Christians believe that He is of himself disposed to fulfill our desires. They do indeed expect that he will do something for them, in consequence of their prayers, which he would not have done for them if they had not prayed; but they do not therefore consider him a changeable being. To give blessings when they are asked, which he would not have given if they had not been asked, is not more a proof of mutability, than it is to crown with his goodness a cultivated field, which would have yielded nothing for the nourishment of men, if it had not been ploughed and sown.

*Prayer, then, is not an attempt to prevail on the Almighty to alter his plan;* but it either supposes, or it produces in us that state of mind which His wisdom requires as a preparation for the reception of his favors. And certainly it does not destroy or diminish the freeness of divine mercies, that they must be sought before they can be obtained. Who would call in question the benevolence of the man who was disposed to assist every person who applied to him?

Thus it appears that the objections urged against prayer have no force, and are as little founded on reason as on Scripture. They have been suggested by the spirit of irreligion, which labors to estrange man from his Maker.

[Dr. Chalmers has produced a fine chapter on a Special Providence and the Efficacy of Prayer, in his *Nat. Theology*, vol. ii. pp. 314-358.]

590. For the right and acceptable performance of the

duty of prayer, we stand in need of the constant use of sacred scripture. Its doctrines exhibit the privileges which God confers upon believers; its precepts enjoin duties which only his grace can enable us to perform; its histories relate the blessings which men in former ages have obtained; its threatenings denounce evils from which no arm but his own can deliver us; its promises hold out to us the good things prepared for those who seek him; and the prayers of the saints are recorded as patterns to us, when we are placed in similar circumstances.

591. In regard to the *proper subjects of prayer*, it should not be confined to ourselves, but extended to all men. Says the inspired Paul, "I exhort, therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men; for kings, and for all that are in authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty."

Such an exhortation, and commands resembling it in other parts of Scripture, lead us to infer that there is some *efficacy in prayer*. It is not only an expression of our desires, but a *means of obtaining the divine blessing*. It is improper, therefore, to consider it as solely intended for our personal improvement, by awakening devout sentiments and feelings, and giving scope for the exercise of Christian tempers; there is a connection between it and the end proposed, similar to the connection between means and ends in the economy of nature.

592. *Prayer may be distinguished*, according to the circumstances in which it is delivered, into *public*, *social*, and *secret*. There is always a demand for prayer in public religious assemblies, in smaller circles and families, and in solitude.

Of *social or family prayer*, our Savior has given an example in his prayers for and with his disciples: it is implied in the accounts of good men, which we find in the Scriptures; and it has been practiced in all ages by the saints. There is no proper fear of God in that house where the social exercises of devotion are unknown; and it is worthy of observation, while the fact may seem strange, and is deeply to be lamented, that it is only among professed or nominal Christians that family worship is neglected, and that Mohammedans, and even



heathens, act more consistently in carrying their religion into the bosom of their families, and the ordinary transactions of life.

The influence of daily prayer, morning and evening, upon the members of a family, when properly conducted, is one of the most powerful safeguards of virtue, and aids to the culture of piety in the family circle, and in the community of which such family forms an important integral part.

#### XI. *What Prayers are acceptable.*

593. (1.) Those which are addressed to God alone, and not to any created being, however exalted. "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve." He has also appropriated to himself the title of Hearer of prayer. Neither saints nor angels can hear us, or supply our necessities, if they could.

(2.) Prayers, to be acceptable, must be offered up in the name of Christ, the *only* mediator between God and men.

(3.) They must be regulated by the Scriptures, and consist solely in petitions for such blessings as God has promised to bestow or encouraged us to ask for.

(4.) In prayer, the understanding must be exercised, or it will not be a rational service. If men repeat a number of words without meaning, or without reflecting upon their import; if they are ignorant or inattentive, instead of drawing down the blessing of God, they will incur his displeasure. Hence the practice of praying in an unknown tongue is most irrational, unscriptural, and useless.

(5.) Prayers must be offered up with the heart, as well as with the understanding; they must be, not only intelligent, but sincere.

(6.) "If we do not live in the daily study of the holy scriptures, we shall want the highest motives to this duty, and the best helps for performing it acceptably."

(7.) Those who offer acceptable prayer, will not confine it to the Sabbath day, but esteem it a privilege and a duty to offer it each day of their lives, and that more than once, in secret and in their families. They will also be happy to frequent, during the week, those meetings in which social prayer is offered.

## XII. *Duty of Supporting and Encouraging Public Worship.*

594. We have shown that the public worship of God is a dictate of reason, and is recommended by the very important advantages, personal and social, which attend it. We have shown that it constitutes an important integral part of the appropriate occupation of Sabbath time. It is proper and beneficial, also, occasionally during the week.

It is seen thus, to be the duty of men to maintain the public worship of God, and to secure its being conducted in a manner honorable to God, and profitable to themselves.

This will require provision to be made for the education and support of an order of men qualified to conduct the public service of God; not only among ourselves, but in other communities that are destitute. This cannot be done without liberal contributions of the requisite means; which, therefore, should be regarded as a part of our religious duty, and of the duty of philanthropy; for the best temporal, as well as eternal interests of men, are promoted by the public service in Christian churches. These contributions should not be exacted only of the liberal few, but every man and woman should, according to their ability, bear a cheerful part. If this were done throughout Christendom, not many years would elapse before the advantages of Christian worship would be enjoyed by all nations.

The duty of supporting public worship relates not merely to bearing the expense of it, but also to affording encouragement, by a regular attendance upon it, and a serious participation in its solemn exercises.

It also implies the erecting of suitable houses for the public worship of God, neat, tasteful, commodious, respectable; though it does not require the expense and ostentation of erecting those which are gorgeous and extravagant in their decorations.

[Professor Dick's Lectures; Dick's Philosophy of Religion; Paley's Moral Philosophy; Archbishop Secker's Works; Phelps on the Sabbath; Bush on Exodus.]

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551. What is the nature of this precept?

552. What considerations show the importance of such a precept, for the sake of securing the public worship of God?

553. What account have we in the Scriptures of the origin and date of the Sabbath?
554. As an institution, of how many parts does the Sabbath consist?
555. What is said respecting the date of this institution?
556. Was the Sabbath intended to be observed by all men, or by the Jews only?
557. What objection made to this view of the subject is first noticed?
558. What reply is made to this objection?
559. What are some of the favorite proof-texts of the opponents of the Sabbath?
560. What things are unjustly assumed concerning these passages?
561. What is the real meaning of the passages under consideration?
562. What other passage is improperly adduced to prove that the Sabbath is an institution appointed for the Jews merely?
563. How is this passage to be explained?
564. Can we produce any positive precept in support of such a change?
565. What facts are related in the New Testament, which show that the apostles and early Christians celebrated the first day of the week as the Sabbath?
566. How were the Jews required to observe the Sabbath?
567. Is the same strictness in the mode of keeping the Sabbath obligatory upon Christians?
568. What prominent purposes were to be answered by the Sabbath?
569. What kinds of labor, on the Sabbath, are clearly prohibited?
570. What are the usual consequences of a flagrant violation of the Sabbath?
571. What particular testimony may here be referred to in proof?
572. How does it appear that the Sabbath, as a day of rest from worldly labor, is for man a wise and merciful appointment?
573. For what other class of beings beside man was the weekly Sabbath mercifully appointed?
574. What important medical testimony may be adduced in favor of the observance of the Sabbath, and, consequently, in proof of the wisdom and mercifulness of its appointment?
575. What important testimony is given by Lord Chief Justice Hale, to the value of a regular and strict observance of the Sabbath?
576. What testimony has God himself given of his displeasure against a Sabbath-breaking nation, and against Sabbath-breaking individuals?
577. What inference may be justly drawn from these remarks concerning the legislative action of our government?
578. What class of persons are particularly addressed in the Fourth Commandment, and especially charged with the responsibility of promoting its observance, beside observing it themselves?
579. What would be the consequences were the Sabbath universally abolished?
580. What is the nature of this duty?
581. Does the light of nature teach us the duty of prayer?
582. Is prayer inculcated as a duty upon all in the sacred scriptures?
583. What objection may first be noticed?
584. What answers may be returned to this objection?
585. For what reasons may prayer be required?
586. How is it shown that the divine goodness does not supersede the duty, or destroy the utility of prayer?
587. What other objection is advanced for the discouragement of prayer?
588. What answer does Dr. Paley return to this objection?
589. What answer does Professor Dick furnish to this objection?
590. Where may we obtain all the information that is needful to the right and acceptable performance of the duty of prayer?

591. Who are proper subjects of prayer?  
 592. How may prayer be distinguished?  
 593. What prayers are acceptable?  
 594. Whence results this duty, and what does it imply?

## THE SECOND TABLE OF THE LAW.

## FIFTH COMMANDMENT.

*"Honor thy father and thy mother; that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee."*

WE enter now upon the consideration of the Second Table, or Tablet, of the law, prescribing our *Duty to Man*. It is, in fact, our duty to God, because he enjoins it; but it is called our duty to man because he is the immediate object of it.

I. *General Design of the Fifth Commandment.*

595. It prescribes the duties of *superiors and inferiors*, while the remaining four precepts of the law relate to men considered as equals. It may be regarded as the *Law of Relative Duty*: the duty of one of the relations of life being taught as a representation of the rest. Though the duty of the inferior only, the child, is here brought to view, yet, according to rules of interpretation already explained, the corresponding duty of the superior, the parent, is implied.

596. Some of the relations of society are founded in nature; others in mutual compact. Men are, by nature, related universally to each other, as they are descended from one common stock, for "God has made of one blood all nations of men to dwell on the face of the earth." They are more particularly related, as they are descended from the same immediate or remote ancestors.

There are other relations, which, although agreeable to nature, or to the constitution, circumstances, and wants of man, are yet founded on mutual compact: of this description are the relations of husband and wife, masters and servants, magistrates and subjects.

The duties resulting from these relations are of so much importance to the order and happiness of society, that they are made, in this commandment, the subject of positive prescription.



*The School-Boy.*

597. A late writer observes :—" I knew a little boy at school whose father was dead. He was one day writing a copy in his book, 'Honor thy father and thy mother;' he wrote a few lines, and then laid down his pen and began to weep. He began again, and wrote a few lines more; but his memory was at work recalling to his mind the happy days he had passed with his dear deceased father, and he wept anew. He could not go on, but sobbed aloud. 'What is the matter, my boy?' said his teacher. 'Oh Mr. Blake, I cannot write this copy; for my father is dead. Please give me another page, and cut this leaf out. I cannot write it.'"

That little boy's conduct, in honoring his parent, may serve to prepare us for a consideration of the duties of the Fifth Commandment.

II. *Duty of Children to Parents.*

598. Under the term *honor*, are included many particulars. *Children are hereby required* to love their parents; to reverence them in their hearts, and treat them with outward respect; to obey their *lawful* commands; to conform to the regulations which they establish in their families; to entertain a grateful sense of all the care and kindness which they have experienced from them; to acknowledge them in any important step that is contemplated; to assist and support them according to their ability, if they are in such circumstances as to be dependent upon them; and to continue their good offices during the joint lives of themselves and their parents.

599. The duty of *love* involves the following particulars :—

(1.) It is the only state of mind from which all the other duties that we owe them arise. We should guard most carefully against prejudice, and not allow an unfavorable impression in regard to them to be made upon our minds.

(2.) Love will *cause us to delight in their company*, and to take pleasure in being at home with them.

(3.) It will prompt us also *to strive in all things to please them*. If we are careless whether we please or displease any one, it is obviously impossible that we can

have any affection for them. A CHILD'S PLEASURE SHOULD BE TO PLEASE HIS PARENTS.

(4.) Love to parents implies *a desire of their good opinion*. Children should be desirous, and even anxious, to stand high in the opinion of their parents, and nothing can be a more decisive proof of a bad disposition in a son or a daughter, than their being quite indifferent what their parents think of them.

600. The duty of *filial reverence* has respect to *feelings, words, and actions*.

*Honor thy father, and thy mother*, is the command.

(1.) This implies *high thoughts of their superiority*, both natural and instituted (as placed by God over us), and a *submission of the heart to their authority*, in a way of sincere and profound respect.

(2.) Our *words should correspond* with the reverential feelings of the heart. When speaking to them, our address, both in language and in tones, should be modest, and respectful; for they are not our equals, but superiors.

*When differing from them in opinion*, our views should be expressed not with the flippancy of disputants, but with the meek inquisitiveness of pupils. *Should they reprove*, and even more sharply than we think is due, we should neither answer again nor show resentment. *In their company* there should always be a restraint upon our speech. We should *never talk of their faults* to others. We should not speak of them in a jocosé or familiar manner, nor say anything that would lead others to think lightly, or to suppose that *we* think lightly of them. Their reputation, if attacked, is to be defended with promptitude, so far as truth will allow.

(3.) Reverence should extend to *all our behavior* toward our parents. The utmost deference and respect is to be paid, not only when we are observed by others, but when no other spectator is near.

*Duty of Children with respect to the Regulations of the Family.*

601. (1.) In every well ordered family, things are not left to chance, but regulated by fixed laws: there is a time for everything, and everything in its time; a place for everything, and everything in its place. Meals, prayer, going to bed, and rising in the morning, are all in their appointed season.

To these rules it is the obvious duty of every branch of the family, older, as well as younger, to submit, even though they may consider the rules too strict. It is enough that the parent has enacted them.

(2.) It is the right of parents, also, to decide what *visitors* shall be brought to the house; and it is in the higher degree unbecoming, for a child to introduce, or even wish or attempt to introduce, any companion, contrary to the known will of a parent.

(3.) The same remark will apply to *recreations*: parents must determine this point, and no child that has the proper feelings of a child, would desire to set up any amusements which the taste, and especially the conscience, of a father or mother forbids.

Instances have occurred of young people inviting such friends, and joining with them in such diversions, in the absence of their parents, as they know to be decidedly contrary to the law of the house. This is an act of base and wicked rebellion against parental authority, and such an unprincipled disregard to parental comfort, as language is too weak to characterize.

(4.) Even the *books* which are brought into the house, must be in accordance with the domestic rule. If the parent forbid the introduction of novels, romances, or any other books, a child, in most cases, should forego his own predilections, and yield to an authority which he cannot resist, without opposing the institute of nature and religion.

#### *Duty of Children in Regard to Misconduct of Parents.*

602. Though children are not absolved from the obligation of this commandment by the misconduct of their parents, yet, in the nature of things, it is impossible that they should yield the same hearty respect and veneration to the unworthy as to the worthy, nor does God require a child to pay an *irrational* honor to his parents. If his parents are atheists, he cannot honor them as Christians; if they are prayerless and profane, he cannot honor them as religious. If they are worldly, avaricious, overreaching, unscrupulous as to veracity and honest dealing, he cannot honor them as exemplary, upright, and conscientious. If they are intemperate and abandoned, he cannot honor them as sober and virtuous, nor truly speak of them as such. But a child is particularly obliged to think as

well as he can of his parents, and to conceal their faults unless the good of society obviously requires their exposure.

[Bush on Exodus.]

When children feel it necessary to speak to their parents of misconduct on the part of the latter, they should do it with all possible gentleness and modesty, and the most sincere regret on being compelled to perform so unnatural an office.

*Duty of Kindness to Parents.*

603. (1.) *When parents are greatly inferior in talents and acquirements*, there is a fine occasion for the exercise of filial piety. Some parents are deficient not only in information, but in judgment; their weakness is manifest to all. In such cases, the more highly gifted children may show their kindness, by not taunting their parents with their defects; by not laughing at their mistakes, or exposing or correcting them so as to wound the feelings of the parent.

Sometimes illiterate parents expend their hard earnings, to procure for their children the advantages and refinements of a polished education, thus creating a vast superiority to themselves in their children. In such cases, it would be exceedingly unkind and criminal in those children to undervalue or condemn those parents, whose very ignorance imparts a greater value to the sacrifice of labor and of money that was cheerfully made for the improvement of their children.

(2.) Kindness will show itself *in generous attention to poor parents*. In the changes of human affairs, many children leave their parents behind them in the humble vale of poverty, and some have lost their filial piety in the ascent. Few more shocking scenes can be presented to a feeling mind, than a rich son or daughter ashamed of, and unkind to, a poor father or mother.

How beautiful a scene, the very opposite of this, was exhibited in the palace of Pharaoh, when Joseph, then the prime minister of state, led in a poor old shepherd to the presence of the king, and, before all the lords of the Egyptian court, introduced the decrepit and care-worn pilgrim as his father. Who, after looking at this, will ever be ashamed of a parent because he is clad in the garb of poverty.



(3.) Kindness operates *in the way of affording them all things necessary for their comfort.*

The author of the *Æneid* has denominated his hero the pious *Æneas*, because of the heroic manner in which he bore his decrepit father from the flames of Troy. Two inhabitants of Sicily obtained distinction in ancient story for their kindness to their aged parents in carrying them upon their shoulders from an eruption of Mount *Ætna*. A beautiful instance of filial piety is related by Bruce, concerning a young man of highly cultivated mind, who enlisted as a recruit in the company of an English officer, that he might procure the sum of ten guineas to release his aged and venerable father from imprisonment for debt.

“Grieve not thy father till he die,  
Lest, when he sleeps in earth’s cold breast,  
The record of his latest sigh  
Should prove a dagger to thy rest.”

When Epaminondas had won three battles over the Lacedæmonians, the subject which gave him the most pleasure was, that his father was living to enjoy the news.

(4.) Kindness, equally with gratitude, as before remarked, will manifest itself by *affectionate attention and tender sympathy in their sickness.* In all our world it is difficult to find a lovelier, holier, sweeter scene, than that of a pious and affectionate daughter, devoting her time, and strength, and inventive assiduities to the comfort of a father or a mother, confined for years to the room and the bed of sickness. There are children, who, at an age when there is usually a taste and capacity for the pleasures of society, have abstracted themselves from all company, to be the constant and almost sole companions of that dear sufferer, to alleviate whose sorrows was almost their only happiness. In view of such examples, let children aspire to the character of being a ministering angel to a father and a mother.

For other illustrations of kindness consult James’s *Guide to Domestic Happiness*.

A beautiful picture of filial and maternal love is given by one of our finest poets, in describing his own feelings while abroad, in Europe, after an absence of four years.

Dear mother! dost thou love me yet?  
Am I remembered in my home?  
When those I love for joy are met,  
Does some one wish that I would come?

Thou dost—I *am* belov'd of these !  
 But, as the school-boy numbers o'er  
 Night after night the Pleiades,  
 And finds the stars he found before—  
 As turns the maiden oft her token—  
 As counts the miser aye his gold—  
 So, till life's silver cord is broken,  
 Would I of thy fond love be told.  
 My heart is full, mine eyes are wet—  
 Dear mother ! dost thou love thy long lost wanderer yet ?  
 WILLIS.

604. It is the duty of children to *consult their parents*. Parents are our natural counselors : their tender relation to us, their regard for our welfare, and their experience enforce the duty of consulting them on the subject of companions, of books, of recreations, of trade, and even of *marriage*.

*Obedience due from Children.*

605. The divine command is : “Children, *obey* your parents.”

(1.) Obedience should begin *early* : the younger a child, the more he needs a guide and a ruler.

(2.) Obedience should be *universal*—“Children, obey your parents *in all things*.” The only exception to this, is, when their commands are clearly, in the letter or spirit of them, opposed to the commands of God. In this case, as well as in every other, *we must obey God rather than man*. Even here, the refusal to comply should be expressed in a meek and respectful manner.

(3.) Obedience should be *prompt*. As soon as the command is uttered, it should be complied with. It is a disgrace to any child that it should be necessary for a father or a mother to repeat a command.

(4.) It should be *cheerful*. Constrained and unwilling obedience is rebellion in principle. God loveth a cheerful giver, and so doth man. A child retiring from a parent's presence muttering, sullen, and murmuring, is one of the ugliest spectacles in creation.

(5.) Obedience should be *self-denying*. The child, like the soldier, should sacrifice his own predilections, and perform the things that are difficult as well as those that are easy.

(6.) It should be *uniform* ; as unreserved *when parents are absent, as when they are present*. How sublimely simple and striking was the reply of the child, who, upon

being pressed in company to take something which his absent parents had forbidden him to touch, and who, upon being reminded that they were not there to witness him, replied, "Very true, but God and my conscience are here."

*Submission to Family Discipline.*

606. It requires that if at any time we have behaved so as to render parental chastisement necessary, we should take it patiently, and not be infuriated by passion, or excited to resistance. It should be remembered that parents are commanded by God to correct the faults of their children, and that they are actuated by love in performing this self-denying and painful duty. It is the duty of offending children, ingenuously to confess their faults, and submit to whatever punishment the authority and wisdom of the parent may appoint. It is proof both of strength of mind and of good disposition of heart to say, "I have done wrong, and it is proper I should bear chastisement."

In the case of older children, when reproof is necessary, they should receive it with submission, and not with indifference or sullen contempt, nor make any insolent replies. The conduct of some children after reproof, is a deeper wound on the heart of a parent, than that which preceded and deserved the reproof.

*Motives to the Performance of Filial Duties.*

607. Perhaps there are few branches of moral obligation more frequently alluded to, or more variously enjoined in sacred scripture than that of filial piety.

(1.) The lives of the Hebrew patriarchs from the beginning of the world, are so drawn up as to exhibit and recommend this virtue.

(2.) It is commanded, as we have seen, in one of the precepts of the moral law. By the national Mosaic law, stubborn disobedience to parental authority was punished with death.

(3.) The Book of Proverbs contains almost innumerable apothegms on this subject.

(4.) The prophets frequently allude to it; and Jeremiah, in the history of the Rechabites, has preserved a very extraordinary instance of hereditary filial obedience for three hundred years when the instance was recorded: an account is also given of its acceptableness to God.

(5.) In the New Testament filial obedience is embodied in the example of Christ, of whom it is said, "Jesus went down and was subject to his parents." That wonderful personage, God manifest in the flesh, was subject, we have reason to believe, till, at the age of thirty, he entered upon his public ministry; and those parents, it should be remembered, were a poor, but pious couple, who earned their daily bread by the sweat of their brow. Upon the cross, amid his dying agonies, filial piety shone forth in commending his weeping mother to the care of a disciple.

(6.) The apostles enforced the duty by various commendations. "Children obey your parents, *for this is right*," a thing not obligatory merely because it is commanded, but commanded because it is right; a duty so obvious even to reason that all nations, ancient and modern, civilized and savage, admit its obligation. It is also said to be "*well pleasing unto the Lord*."

(7.) The *comfort of parents* is another motive. The earthly happiness of a father and a mother depends far more upon the conduct of their children than upon anything else.

And now, farewell! 'Tis hard to give thee up,  
 With death so like a gentle slumber on thee;—  
 And thy dark sin! Oh! I could drink the cup,  
 If from this woe its bitterness had won thee.  
 May God have called thee, like a wanderer, home,  
 My lost boy Absalom!

WILLIS.

(8.) The *obligations of gratitude* require filial piety. Children are ever contracting obligations from the first moment of their existence, for parental care and labor in helpless infancy and childhood, for education, and competence, and perhaps also, for religious culture.

(9.) *Interest* supports the duty of filial obedience. An undutiful child cannot be a *happy* one—while to the dutiful child is given in the law the *promise of long life*, and the same promise is repeated by an apostle in the New Testament, which implies that, to a certain extent, the promise is still in force. The late Dr. Dwight remarks: "In conversing with the plain people of this country, distinguished for their good sense and careful observation of facts, I have found them, to a great extent, firmly persuaded of the verification of this promise in our own times. *Their opinion is mine*, and with their observation my own



has coincided." To these may be added the remarks of Professor Bush : " Even at the present day, it can scarcely be doubted that, *as a general fact*, those who are exemplary in the discharge of filial duties become the objects of a *specialty rewarding providence*, in the longer enjoyment of life, and of those temporal blessings which make it desirable. On the other hand, what close observer of the retributive dealings of God can question, that in multitudes of cases the untimely deaths of the young have been the judicial consequences of disobedience to their parents ! In how many instances has the confession been extorted from convicted felons, that the first step in their downward career was despising the commands of parents, and the next the breach of the holy Sabbath."

(10.) It may be added, that an eminently dutiful child is an object of delight, admiration, and esteem, to all who have an opportunity of witnessing his conduct ; he goes through society, surrounded by a glory purer than that of fame, and far more conducive to his own comfort.

608. They owe to each other ardent, mutual love ; beside this, the younger are bound to entertain a kind deference to the elder children as their superiors in age, and generally in various attainments ; while it is the duty of the elder to treat the younger members of the family with a mild and indulgent care for their improvement and happiness, presenting before them at all times an example proper and safe to be imitated, since the example of elder persons in a family is generally imitated by the younger.

### III. *Duties of Parents to their Children.*

The duties of children to their parents draw along with them the duties of parents to their children. There is required a reciprocity of good offices.

#### *General View of Parental Duties.*

609. Parents are bound to take care of their children in early life ; to provide food and clothing for them ; to give them an education which will prepare them both for this world and for the next ; to watch over their morals, encourage them in that which is good, and restrain them from evil ; to exercise authority, reasonably and mildly, but firmly ; to endeavor to settle them in life ; to admin-

ister to them the counsels of experience ; and, in a word, to consider them as a trust from God, which they ought to manage with incessant vigilance.

A parent who neglects his duty to his offspring, ought not to be surprised if they fail in their duty to him, and has no right to complain either to God or man.

As another incentive to parental fidelity, it may be stated that many of the evils and miseries of society would vanish before a right performance of parental duties.

610. (1.) Parents must have a correct view of the nature and design of the domestic constitution, and must keep it ever before their mind, that *its great design is to form well the character of the children* ; to assist the child, as a mortal, to go with honor and comfort through this life, and as an immortal, to reach life everlasting.

(2.) Parents should realize the fact, that on them it depends, in a great measure, what their children are to be—miserable or happy in themselves—a comfort, or a curse, to their connections ; an ornament or a deformity to society, a fiend, or a seraph in eternity.

(3.) Parents should earnestly seek after the possession of all possible *qualifications for their office*. These qualifications are the following : *personal religion* ; the *entire government of temper* ; a habit of self-control ; a meekness not to be disturbed by the greatest provocation ; a patience not to be wearied by long continued opposition ; a *habit of discrimination* with regard to conduct and its motives, and also with regard to the dispositions of children, and the mode of treatment they require ; a *kindness of manner*, rendering them agreeable to their children ; *prudence and good sense* ; *firmness*, in denying improper requests, or administering suitable correction ; *varied information and extensive knowledge*, qualifying them to direct the studies, to answer the inquiries, to correct the mistakes, to assist the pursuits, and, in short, to superintend the general instruction of their families ; *unvarying and inflexible consistency* of excellence.

(4.) Parents should make religion the chief desire and the highest object of pursuit, as a possession for their children.

*Various Branches of Parental Duty.*

611. (a.) Some relate more directly to the *present life*, and the *formation of the character generally*.

612. (1.) MAINTENANCE is, of course, a claim which every child justly possesses upon his parents, till he is of a sufficient age to be able to provide for himself. The wants of children make it necessary that some person maintain them : and as no one has a right to burden others by his act, it follows that the parents are bound to undertake this charge themselves.

Hence we learn the guilt of those who run away from their families, or (what is much the same), in consequence of idleness or drunkenness, throw them upon public charity ; or who leave them destitute at death, when, by diligence and frugality, they might have laid up a provision for their support.

*(2.) Scholastic Instruction.*

613. This is another duty that parents owe their children. No man, with all the advantages of education universally provided by the state, and by private liberality, should suffer his family to be, in this respect, behind the enlightened age in which they live. To grudge the money spent in this way, is a cruel and detestable niggardliness. A good education is a portion, the only one which some are able to give their children, and which, in many cases, has led to every other kind of wealth.

614. The *judicious selection of a school* is a matter of indescribable importance. Parents should be guided in their choice, not by a mere regard to intellectual or ornamental accomplishments, but wherever real piety is inculcated, a thirst for knowledge excited, and habits of application, reflection, sobriety of judgment, and good sense are formed, that is the school to be selected by a wise and Christian parent.

615. *Education*, properly understood, is not so much the communication of knowledge, as the *formation of character*. A youth may have his head stuffed full of Latin and Greek, of mathematics, and natural philosophy ; a girl may draw, and dance, and play, and speak French, exquisitely, and yet be miserably educated, after

all. Integrity, good sense, generosity, and a capacity for reflection, are worth all the acquirements which even a university can bestow. These, however, are not incompatible with each other: the perfection of education is the union of both.

(3.) *Due Regard to the Health of Children.*

616. A *due regard to the health of children* should be maintained. Physical education is of no small importance. Knowledge gained at the expense of health is purchased at a fearful expense.

There are other ways of injuring the health beside that of a too close application to learning; among these is the habit of pampering the appetites of children, making the gratification of appetite too prominent an object, and especially when resorting to it as a reward of good conduct—a practice which not only corrupts health, but morals, and brings up children to be governed by appetite rather than by reason, which is, in fact, the secret cause of all the intemperance and profligacy of the world.

617. (4.) *Parents should instruct their children to form low notions of the importance of riches and worldly show, and of the power which these things have either to give respectability to the character, or to procure happiness.*

Children should not hear their parents magnify the value of wealth by words, nor see them do it by actions. No undue solicitude should be shown about grandeur of abode or furniture. Children should early learn from their parents, that it is CHARACTER that CONSTITUTES TRUE RESPECTABILITY; that a good man is reputable in any circumstances, a bad man in none. They should also be encouraged to consider, and seek, and use wealth, rather as a means of usefulness, than a source of personal gratification.

618. (5.) It is the duty of parents to lead their children to the *formation of industrious habits*; to caution them against sauntering and slothfulness; to impress them with the value of time, showing that it is the stuff of which life is made, and that we lose as much of life as we do of time. Habits of *order and punctuality* should also be enforced.

619. (6.) *Economy* is no less necessary. Industry and economy belong, not to savage, but to civilized life. When teaching economy, parents must be careful, how-



ever, not to drive the mind into covetousness. With all their endeavors to cherish frugality, they should be no less assiduous to encourage generosity; and to impress their children with the idea, that the end of saving is not to hoard, but to provide for our own wants, and to distribute to the wants of others.

620. (7.) *Children should be provided with suitable employment.* It is our happiness to live in a country where trade and industry are accounted honorable.

621. (8.) GENEROSITY should be most assiduously inculcated, and thus the selfishness of our nature be counteracted.

Let children be early taught that the highest enjoyment arises not from individual gratification, but from a communion in pleasure. They should hear much of the happiness arising from gratifying others, of the luxury and beauty of benevolence, and of the meanness of greediness. They should be sent on errands of mercy to the poor and needy, that, being spectators both of their misery, and of their tears of gratitude for relief, they may acquire a disposition to do good. They should be encouraged to practice self-denial to have the means of beneficence, but no compulsory benevolent action should be attempted, as this course would tend to disgust them with it.

622. (9.) PRUDENCE is of vast consequence in the affairs of life. This is, next to piety, the most valuable quality of character. Half the misery of some persons' lives, who are good people too, arises from a rash, thoughtless, indiscreet mind. Hence children should be led to cultivate a deliberative, reflecting judgment; to weigh their words, and measure their actions; to form the habit of looking forward to the tendency and result of conduct; to observe a suitable decorum in words, and thoughts, and actions. They are to be taught that this wisdom is far above learning, genius, taste, accomplishments.

623. (10.) REGARD should be had by parents to the EDUCATION OF CIRCUMSTANCES. The sentiments they drop occasionally, the conversation overheard by children when playing in the corner of the room, the maxims that govern the *conduct* of parents, their example, the likings and dislikings they express—these educate children, more than schools do. The society that parents live in—their

house, table, daily behavior, domestics—these educate a child. This education of circumstances begins as soon as children are capable of receiving or forming an idea; it goes on every instant of wakeful existence; and the character of children will be affected materially according to the tendency of these circumstances.

624. (11.) While maternal influence is great, and essential, *no father should imagine that he can escape from obligation* to bring all the weight of his own careful instructions and correct example, to assist those of the mother in the education of a family. Though teachers be employed, in the education of children, yet such is *the inevitable influence of parents*, that these are, in a most important sense, the educators of their offspring, except when separated from them. The first book and the most important that children read, is that of their *parents' example and daily deportment*; and parents should ponder carefully what they write in this domestic book.

(b.) *Duties which Parents owe their Children, in reference to their Religious Character, and Future Welfare.*

625. (1.) INSTRUCTION. As soon as reason dawns in the child, instruction should commence in the fundamental parts of revealed truth, and be conducted with reference to the capacity of the child. The basis of instruction should be the Bible, and oral explanations should be added. At a certain age, judicious catechisms may be employed to advantage, in connection with the Bible.

*Thelwall and Coleridge.*

626. Thelwall thought it very unfair to influence a child's mind by inculcating any opinions before it should come to years of discretion, and be able to choose for itself. "I showed him my garden," says Coleridge, "and told him it was my botanical garden." "How so," said he, "for it is covered with weeds." "Oh!" I replied, "*that* is because it has not come to its age of discretion and choice. The weeds, you see, have taken the liberty to grow, and I thought it unfair in me to prejudice the soil toward roses and strawberries."

Instruction must be *conveyed in a pleasing, and not compulsory and forbidding form*. Children should not be wearied with long lectures, nor disgusted with long tasks.

Never should religious tasks be prescribed as penalties for bad conduct.

Instruction must always be delivered *with great seriousness*. It ought not to be exclusively confined to the Sabbath, but be the business of every day ; yet it should be especially attended to on the day of rest from worldly pursuits.

627. (2.) PERSUASION, ADMONITION, AND WARNING, are a very important part of religious education.

628. (3.) DISCIPLINE is an important parental duty. By discipline, is meant, the maintenance of parental authority, and the exercise of it, in the way of restraining and punishing offenses. Parents are appointed by God to *rule*, to be the sovereigns of the house, allowing no interference from without, no resistance from within. Their government must be firm, but mild : the love of the parent must not relax the reins of the governor, nor the authority of the governor diminish the love of the parent.

The first thing a child should be made to understand, is, that he is to do, not what he *likes*, but what he *is commanded* ; that he is *not to govern, but to be governed*. He must be made to submit while young, and then submission will become a habit.

All commands, however, should be *reasonable*. Nothing but what is wise should be enjoined, and every injunction that is issued should be obeyed ; if not, punishment should follow.

629. *Correction* is an essential part of discipline ; for rewards and punishments are as necessary in the government of a family, as in that of a state. Correction is enjoined in the Scriptures as a needful duty. “ He that spareth the rod,” saith Solomon, “ hateth his son.”

Yet a stern and rigid severity is not a duty. The first object of every parent should be, to render punishment unnecessary. It is better to prevent crimes than to punish them. This *can* be done to a great extent, but it requires a very early, very judicious, and very watchful system of training. If this be neglected, severity often becomes necessary.

630. *Corporal punishment*, though occasionally it may be necessary, is not good as a *system*. To render it in a good degree unnecessary, children should, from the dawn

of reason, be made to feel that parental favor is their richest reward for good conduct, and parental displeasure the severest rebuke for misbehavior. Happy the parent who has attained to such skill in government, as to guide with a look, to reward with a smile, and to punish with a frown.

631. When severe chastisement becomes necessary, the following RULES should be observed: never chastise in a state of anger; patiently examine the offense before you punish it; accurately discriminate between sins of presumption, and sins of ignorance or inadvertence; accidents should not be punished, unless they involve willful disobedience; apportion the sentence to the degree of offense and the disposition of the offender; ingenuous confession and sincere penitence should, in most cases, arrest the process of judgment, and the child be made to punish himself by remorse: till repentance is produced, scarcely anything is gained by chastisement; instruments of punishment should not be kept perpetually in sight, for this is to govern by fear, and not by love; be very cautious not to threaten what you either do not intend, or are not able to inflict; and forbear threatening as much as possible: in the case of older children, the greatest caution is necessary in expressing a parent's displeasure: reasonable expostulation, tender reproof, appeals to their understanding, feelings, and conscience, are all that can be allowed in this instance. Corporeal correction can do good only before the understanding can argue upon the heinousness of the offense; or after it appears that the young offender will not regard *rational* methods of chastisement, or appeals to the higher powers.

632. *Parents should be very careful not to foster, by injudicious treatment, those very propensities which, when more fully developed, they will find it necessary to repress by discipline. Lying and ill-nature are encouraged by smiling at a false or malignant expression, because it is cleverly said. Pride is nourished by excessive flattery and commendation; vanity, by loading them with finery, and both admiring them and teaching them to admire themselves; revenge, by directing them to vent their impotent anger upon the persons or things that have injured them; insolence and oppression, by allowing them to be rude to servants.*



*Discipline*, to be effectual, should be *steady* and *unvarying*, not fitful and capricious; it must be a system which, like the atmosphere, shall press always and everywhere upon its subjects.

*Both parents should join* to support domestic authority.

*Robert Hall's Reproof.*

633. Once, says Dr. Gregory, when Mr. Hall was spending an evening at the house of a friend, a lady, who was there on a visit, retired, that her little girl, of four years old, might go to bed. She returned in about half an hour, and said to a lady near her, "She is gone to sleep; I put on my night-cap and lay down by her, and she soon dropped off." Mr. Hall, who overheard this, said, "Excuse me, madam: do you wish your child to grow up a liar?" "Oh dear no, sir; I should be shocked at such a thing." "Then bear with me while I say, you must never *act a lie* before her: children are very quick observers, and soon learn that that which assumes to be what it is not, is a lie, whether acted or spoken."

634. (4.) *EXAMPLE* is necessary to give power and influence to all other means. In alluring children to religion, parents must be able to say, "Follow me." To exert a suitable influence, the religion of parents must be *eminent*, and *consistent* with their profession, in all their spirit and behavior, for children have their eyes always upon their parents, and are quick to discern any violations of consistency. Parents must not *tell* them that *religion* is the first thing, and yet *educate* them *for the world*.

635. (5.) *DILIGENT, CONSTANT, AND CAREFUL INSPECTION*, is a most important parental duty. They must never allow any engagements whatever to take off, long together, their eyes from their children. They must study the development of their character under all circumstances in which they have an opportunity to view them, that they may learn what treatment to adopt with reference to each.

Parents should also inspect their family, to know what good or evil is going on among its members.

*Inspection must extend to everything*; to the *servants* that are admitted into the house, for how much injury may be done to the youthful mind by an unprincipled

and artful servant. The *companions* of children should be most narrowly watched: one bad associate may ruin them forever. The *reading* of children should be carefully inspected; and all corrupting books, and newspapers, and indecent pictures, kept out of their way. The *recreations* of children should be watched, and no games allowed that are immodest or likely to lead to gambling.

636. (6.) PRAYER must crown all other efforts; for who, except God, can subdue the tempers or change the hearts of children?

Beside daily private prayer, there should be FAMILY PRAYER.

This should be offered regularly and constantly, morning and evening, each day of the week, at an hour best adapted to the exercise.

The morning or evening hymn of a pious family is one of the most touching sounds in our world.

The prayer should be neither so long as to weary, nor so short as to seem like a mere form. It should be fervent, and chiefly relate to the circumstances of the family.

Seest thou yon lonely cottage in the grove,  
 With little garden neatly planned before,  
 Its roof deep-shaded by the elms above,  
 Moss-grown, and decked with velvet verdure o'er?  
 Go lift the willing latch—the scene explore—  
 Sweet peace, and love, and joy, thou there shalt find;  
 For there Religion dwells: whose sacred lore  
 Leaves the proud wisdom of the world behind,  
 And pours a heavenly ray on every humble mind.

\* \* \* \* \*

Nor yet in solitude his prayers ascend;  
 His faithful partner and their blooming train,  
 The precious word, with reverent minds, attend,  
 The heaven-directed path of life to gain.  
 Their voices mingle in the grateful strain—  
 The lay of love and joy together sing,  
 To Him whose bounty clothes the smiling plain,  
 Who spreads the beauties of the blooming spring,  
 And tunes the warbling throats that make the valley ring

HUNTINGTON.

*Earl Roden.*

637. Dr. Sprague, in his Letters from Europe, gives the following anecdote of this gentleman, finely illustrative of the subject just presented:—"When George IV. was in Ireland, he told Lord Roden that, on a particular

morning, he was coming to breakfast with him. He accordingly came, and, bringing with him two or three of the nobility, happened to arrive just as his lordship and family had assembled for domestic worship. Lord Roden, being told his guest had arrived, went to the door and met him with every expression of respect, and seated him and the gentlemen that accompanied him in his parlor. He then turned to the king and said, 'Your majesty will not doubt that I feel highly honored by this visit; but there is a duty which I have not yet discharged this morning to the King of kings—that of performing domestic worship; and your majesty will be kind enough to excuse me while I retire with my household and attend to it.' 'Certainly,' replied the king, 'but I am going with you,' and he immediately rose and followed him into the hall where the family were assembled; and, taking his station in an old arm-chair, remained during the family devotions."

This anecdote reflects honor upon his lordship and the king; while it exhibits in the one the dignity of unyielding Christian principles, it displays in the other the courtesy of a gentleman, and the regard felt for a consistent religious character.

In view of the duties of parents, although so imperfectly delineated, John A. James very justly remarks: "It is enough to make a parent tremble, to think what a parent should be."

The sketch we have furnished of filial and parental duty is condensed from the admirable volume of Rev. J. A. James, entitled the *Guide to Domestic Happiness*; from which also we shall derive illustrations of some other relative duties.

The duties of *husbands and wives* are comprehended among the relative duties; but it will be more regular to consider them under the Seventh Commandment, which, according to the rules of interpretation formerly laid down, by forbidding the violation of the marriage vow, inculcates the duties arising from the conjugal relation.

#### IV. *Duties of Instructors and Scholars.*

638. The duties of instructors and scholars are very similar to those of parents and children; for instructors are to be regarded, when engaged with their scholars, as

occupying the place of parents, and employed to assist them in the great work of educating children for the duties and responsibilities of life.

639. The prominent objects falling within the sphere of an instructor's duty, are the physical, intellectual, and moral improvement of those committed to his care.

640. There are certain peculiar duties which he owes to himself. He is bound daily to cultivate and furnish his own mind; to regulate his own personal habits and manners, so that he may render himself more fully competent to educate his pupils by example, as well as by direct instruction.

641. In regard to the duty which he owes his scholars, he is to consult and promote their bodily health; he is to learn and practice the most approved and successful methods of communicating knowledge; he is to aim at giving strength and development to their minds; he is to assist them in forming correct habits of thought, and feeling, and action; he is to adapt his instructions and influence to the end of preparing them for the business of life; and he should ever bear in mind, that there is a far more important life than the present, for which he may and should assist in preparing them. He should also keep in view the fact that—

The mind, impressible and soft, with ease  
Imbibes and copies what she hears and sees,  
And through life's labyrinth holds fast the clue  
That education gives her, false or true.

COWPER.

### *Duties of Pupils to their Instructors.*

642. It is, in general, the duty of the pupil to endeavor to acquire that education of mind and body, of feelings, habits, and attainments, which it is the office of the instructor to impart.

Hence it is the duty of the pupil to treat instructors with respect and reverence; to comply promptly and cheerfully with their reasonable suggestions, regulations, and commands; to strive to learn the lessons assigned, to form the habits and manners proper to be cultivated, and to lay aside all those which are vulgar, immoral, or injurious.

It is the duty of every student to conduct in such a manner each day as to be entitled to the approbation of



parents and teachers; also to cultivate a love of knowledge and of truth; to avoid acts of injustice, unkindness, and mischief; to cultivate noble and generous affections and conduct toward fellow-students; and to prepare for the business and duties of life.

#### V. *Duties of Masters or Employers to their Family Servants.*

*"Masters, give unto your servants that which is just and equal."*—Col. iv. 1.

Of all the domestic connections, that between master and servant is perhaps least understood, or; at any rate, most neglected. It springs from varied degrees of men's acquired property: from the love of ease on the one hand, and the urgency of necessity on the other. It is important to guard the master against the disobedience and dishonesty of the servant on the one hand, and the servant against the oppression and cruelty of the master.

#### *Preliminary Remarks.*

643. (1.) Great care should be employed in the *selection of servants*. Other qualifications being equal, pious servants are much to be preferred. In a circle of young children, one unprincipled servant may be the author of incalculable mischief.

(2.) When a servant is engaged, there should be a *very explicit statement of what each party expects from the other*, in regard to service, wages, and privileges.

(3.) Masters should entertain correct notions of the relation they stand in to their servants.

The service referred to in this section, is that which is *voluntary*, and the result of contract; not that which is demanded in a state of slavery.

(4.) Our obligation to domestics and dependents is much greater than theirs to us. It is a mistake to suppose that the rich man maintains his servants, tradesmen, tenants, and laborers: the truth is, they maintain him. It is their industry which supplies his table, furnishes his wardrobe, builds his houses, adorns his equipage, provides his amusements. It is not the estate, but the laborer employed upon it, that pays his rent. All that he does is to distribute what others produce; which is the least part of the business, either in respect to labor or true honor.

*Three Classes of Duties of Masters — Justice, Kindness,  
Religion.*

*Duty of Justice to Servants.*

644. (1.) It demands that the master *give them a fair and prompt remuneration for their labor* ; not only enough to support them in mere existence, but in comfort ; and to enable them to lay up something against a time of destitution and helplessness. Their wages should also be regularly paid. It is disreputable to be long in debt to any one, but utterly scandalous when unpaid servants are the creditors, who ask, without success, for what has been due to them for months.

(2.) Justice demands that servants should be paid for *all the work they do* ; and that everything which, in respect to time or labor, is above the stipulated or usual quantity of service rendered for a given sum, should be most equitably paid for.

(3.) Justice requires that domestic servants be well *provided for in the necessities and accommodations of life*, as to food, lodging, clothing, medicine. Employers that are not able or willing to provide thus for their servants, ought to do their own work.

(4.) Justice also equally demands, in the case of *clerks and apprentices*, that they should *be well taught the business they come to learn* ; especially when, as in many cases, a high premium is paid for this purpose. To neglect to do this is a breach of covenant, and an act of robbery.

(5.) Justice demands that when they desire to leave our service, we should give them, as far as we are able, consistently with truth, a certificate of a good character : their character is their wealth, and if this be gone, their means of subsistence have fled.

(6.) It is but common justice also, *to do something for the support of servants who have worn themselves out in our service*. The Mosaic law, for the Jews, contains such a benevolent provision.

*Duty of Kindness to Servants.*

645. (1.) It requires that we *do not overwork them*, nor make such incessant demands upon their time that they

shall not be able to keep their own clothing in proper repair, nor attend to the concerns of religion.

(2.) It requires that our *method of addressing them* should be *as remote from bitterness and contemptuous pride as from familiarity*.

(3.) Kindness requires that we *manifest an unvarying regard for their comfort*, and make it clear to them that we desire to see them happy.

(4.) It requires us *to bear with those lesser infirmities which may comport with substantial excellences*; and not to be too strict to mark, at least with severity, their more trivial faults. Some persons render their servants miserable by incessant complaint, arising from excessive neatness or self-importance.

(5.) Kindness would lead us *to administer commendation as often as possible, and to censure with as much lenity, as a due regard to justice will allow*.

(6.) Kindness will lead us *to allow our servants various indulgences and recreations that are not incompatible with religion*. To withhold these, converts their service into slavery.

(7.) *Unnecessary changes of servants should be avoided*, and everything that leads to them on the part of the employer, whether bad temper, inflicting excessive labor, or striving after unattainable perfection.

(8.) A kind master or mistress *will prevent servants from being insulted or oppressed by the children*. It is really affecting to see what cruel scorn and impertinence are, in some families, allowed to be practiced toward respectable men and women, by those little tyrant masters and misses, whose weak parents never allow them to be opposed in anything.

*Duties of Religion which Employers owe their Servants.*

646. (1.) The first care must be *not to oppose their religion, or to hinder their salvation*; either by setting before them a *bad example*, or by *direct temptation*, or by *employing them to practice dishonesty or falsehood in the way of trade*, or in *saying to visitors* that their masters are *not at home*, while they are in the house at the very time.

Their salvation is hindered *when we keep them away from the means of salvation*, private or public, especially on the Sabbath day. A warm dinner should, therefore,

for their sake, be dispensed with on the Sabbath, that they may enjoy its religious advantages in common with their employers, as it is equally appointed for both.

(2.) It is our duty to *do everything in our power to promote the salvation of our servants*, by setting them a good example, calling them regularly to family prayer, and making them subjects of it, by teaching them to read the Bible, and furnishing them with other appropriate books, by giving them opportunities for attending public worship, and to keep holy the Sabbath day, by guarding them against pernicious influences of every kind, and by recommending religion in all proper methods.

#### VI. *Duties of Family Servants to their Employers.*

647. These duties briefly consist in respect for their masters or employers as their superiors; submission to their just authority; careful attention to their interests; honesty, diligence, and fidelity; good temper, and gratitude for kindnesses shown to them.

648. The obedience which they owe employers is not unlimited.

(1.) It is limited by their previous stipulation, or established by custom. A general servant is bound to execute all the orders of his master; but a servant engaged only for a particular purpose, is bound only to it, and is guilty of no breach of contract when he declines to interfere with another department.

(2.) It is limited, in the case of both kinds of servants, by the laws of the land and of God. A master has no right to command him to do anything contrary to the laws of the land, and still less to do anything which the law of God has forbidden; for example, to tell lies, to assist him in injustice, fraud, or debauchery; to perform any unnecessary work on the Sabbath.

With these exceptions, the subjection of a servant to his master is absolute, during the time of their connection. The apostle Paul makes use of strong language on this subject, though, in his days, servants among the Greeks and Romans were slaves: "Servants, obey in all things your masters according to the flesh; not with eyeservice, as men-pleasers; but in singleness of heart, fearing God; and whatever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord and not unto men."



VII. *Duties of Magistrates and Subjects ; or, of Officers of Government, and Citizens.*

(a.) *Preliminary Discussion.*

649. Duties of this class, like those of masters and servants, are founded on mutual compact ; because, with the exception of parents and children, between whom nature itself has established an inequality, all men possessed of reason are naturally equal in respect of personal rights, and become subject to others either by violence, which establishes no moral obligation to submission, or by their own consent, virtually or explicitly given.

*Whether Civil Government is a Human or Divine Institution.*

650. Although the Scripture gives its general sanction to civil government, as necessary to the existence and good order of society, it still calls it an *ordinance of man* (1 Pet. ii. 13); signifying that it is a human institution, and consequently that, as in the government of masters, its claim to obedience is not established by force, but by law. The *jus divinum* of governments, when rationally explained, can only mean that the subjects should submit to their authority.

Yet civil government is also (Rom. xiii. 2) called an *ordinance of God*, and the "powers that be" are said to be *ordained of God*. Comparing this with what has been said above it would seem that, according to Scripture, civil government is of divine appointment, and magistrates in the exercise of their lawful authority are, by the command of God, to be obeyed. The *institution*, is of God ; yet the *form*, is human. Hence disobedience to just civil authority, is disobedience to God. The language of Paul in Rom. xiii is, "Let every soul be subject to the higher powers ; for there is no power but of God : the powers that be are ordained of God. Whosoever, therefore, resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God ; and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation" (punishment).

Other portions of the same chapter require to be consulted, in order to understand the will of God relating to the duties now under consideration.

*Design and proper Scope of Civil Government.*

651. "Rulers are not a terror to good works, but to

the evil;" "for he (the magistrate) is the minister (servant) of God to thee *for good*;" "if thou do that which is evil, be afraid, for he beareth not the sword in vain, for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath (punishment) upon him that doeth evil."

The *design of God, then, in the appointment of civil rulers*, which he has provided for, is, to secure the good of society by the preservation of order and morality; and this is the primary object, in the administration or enactment of laws, which rulers, as such, are allowed and required to pursue. Civil government, according to this view, is designed to uphold the interests of justice and humanity by the punishment of evil doers; and on this account, as well as on account of divine appointment for this purpose, is to be supported, honored, and obeyed.

*How far Civil Rulers are to be obeyed.*

652. (1.) In general it may be said, that no government is lawful which does not exist with the formal or virtual consent of the people; and that a despotic government is a usurpation.

(2.) The obedience of subjects or citizens is *limited by the laws of the land*. No man is morally bound to submit to the arbitrary will of an individual, because he is called a king, any more than because he is called a master, or to the will of a lawful magistrate, when he orders anything contrary to the law of the land. The moment he steps beyond the boundary of law, he loses his official character, and becomes a private man or a tyrant.

(3.) The obedience of subjects, or citizens, like that of servants, is *limited by the law of God*. When civil rulers presume to command what He has forbidden, or to forbid what He has commanded, they become rebels against the chief magistrate of this earth, and of the universe, and have no claim, therefore, to our obedience; for the apostolic principle is, "We ought to obey God rather than men."

(4.) *So far as a government patronizes good works, and punishes such as are evil*, so far as it answers the proper end of its institution by maintaining order, and justice, and peace, in civil society, *it is entitled to submission*; but when, instead of protecting, it oppresses the people, we can be no more bound in conscience to recognize it

as lawful, than we are to acknowledge as a minister of Christ, the man who teaches fundamental error in doctrine, and licentiousness in practice.

653. The right of deciding when the duty of obedience ceases, and of resistance to civil authority begins, must belong, obviously, not to the ruler, but to the subject. The early Christians decided for themselves in certain cases when it was proper to resist the civil authorities of the land; and so must the citizens of any government.

When the proper design of government is systematically and repeatedly perverted; or where the form of it is incompatible with the design of its institution, the governed must have a right to remedy the evil. But they cannot have the moral right to remedy one evil by the production of a greater. And, therefore, as there are few greater evils than instability and uncertainty in governments, the cases in which *revolutions* are justifiable must be exceedingly rare.

*Interference of Civil Government in matters of Religion.*

654. The proper sphere of civil government is that of the civil and social relations of men, and their temporal welfare. Religion and morality, as such, are not within the legitimate sphere of the civil authority. To justify the interference of the civil government, therefore, it must be made out, that an opinion, or a religion, is not only false, but that its prevalence is incompatible with the rights of those members of the community who are not embraced within its communion, before the civil authority can be authorized to interfere for its suppression. It is then to be suppressed, not as a religion, but as a public nuisance.

We do not find in the New Testament any commands addressed to magistrates with regard to the suppression of heresies; nor, on the other hand, do we meet with any directions to the church, to interfere with matters pertaining to the civil government. [Dr. Hodge on Romans.]

*The simple province of civil government, with regard to religion*, is to protect its citizens in the liberty to worship God according to the dictates of conscience with the single limitation just expressed. It has no right beyond this to meddle with religious opinions or practices. Free toleration of all religions, except those which can be

proved, in a social respect, to be public nuisances, is the law of the Scriptures, and the practice of our own happy form of government.

*History of the Contest between Civil Rulers and Subjects.*

655. The doctrines respecting the rights of civil rulers, and the line which is to be drawn between their powers and the rights of conscience, have been slow to be understood. The struggle has been long; and a thousand persecutions have shown the anxiety of the magistrate to rule the conscience and to control religion. In pagan countries it has been conceded that the civil ruler had a right to control the *religion* of the people; church and state there have been one. The same thing was attempted under Christianity. The magistrate still claimed this right, and attempted to enforce it. Christianity resisted the claim, and asserted the independent and original rights of conscience. A conflict ensued, of course, and the magistrate resorted to persecutions to subdue by force the claims of the new religion and the rights of conscience. Hence the ten fiery and bloody persecutions of the primitive church. The blood of the early Christians flowed like water; thousands and tens of thousands went to the stake, until Christianity triumphed, and the right of religion to a free exercise was acknowledged throughout the empire.

It is matter of devout gratitude to God that the subject is now settled, and the principle is now understood. In our own land there exists the happy and bright illustration of the true principle on this great subject. The rights of conscience are regarded, and the laws peacefully obeyed. The civil ruler understands his province; and Christians yield a cheerful obedience to the laws. The *church and state* move on in their own spheres, *united* only in the purpose to make men happy and good; and *divided* only as they relate to different departments, and contemplate, the one the rights of civil society, the other the interests of eternity. Thanks should be rendered without ceasing to the God of our fathers for the wondrous train of events by which this contest has been conducted to its issue; and for the clear and full understanding which we now have of the different departments pertaining to the church and the state. [Barnes on Romans.]



(b.) *Duties of Rulers.*

656. The duty of magistrates and rulers, is to govern according to the principles of natural equity and the particular laws of the land; to render obedience to those laws themselves, and to exact obedience of those over whom their just control extends. They are required to enact just laws, and those which are in accordance with the laws of God (if legislative power belongs to them), and to execute them impartially, if executive power be confided to them. They are to guard the rights of citizens; and faithfully to execute justice, in all things and to all men, without regard to wealth, rank, relationship, or party, that they may be a terror to evil doers, and for the praise of them that do well. They are not to infringe upon the rights of their subjects or constituents, by dictating religious sentiments, or prescribing religious forms, or coercing to any religious practices. Toleration and protection are impartially to be extended to all sorts of religionists, except when such practices are indulged by any as may be fairly proved to be demoralizing, and pernicious to the interests of society.

They are to respect the laws of God, as well as the constitution of their country under which they act, and to exert an influence favorable to good morals and piety.

It is their duty to maintain order and peace, to patronize arts and sciences, to encourage virtue, and discourage vice, so far as their lawful influence extends.

They are to remember that they were *appointed to office and power, not for their own advantage, but for the good of society*, and that the latter and not the former is to be the paramount object of pursuit while they hold a public office. They are to be the fathers of their people, and thus merit their respect and willing obedience. "A self-seeker in the person of a public guardian, is the just abhorrence of both God and man. *A public magistrate ought to have a public soul*; and if he cannot or will not expand it to the extent of the public interest, with whose guardianship he is honored, he ought forthwith to retreat back from the honors of public life, within the circumference of his own little self."

[Winslow on Civil and Social Duties.]

They are also to remember that they are not only, especially under our republican government, the servants

of the people, and appointed to carry out the lawful wishes of their *constituents*, of those who have constituted them their official agents; but that they hold an office under the higher government of God; that they are the "*ministers of God* for good;" that they are His servants, not to carry out the designs of party politics, but to promote the prosperity of their country in its civil, commercial, and moral interests. They are to realize therefore that they are amenable to God in a higher degree than to their fellow-men, who requires them, while they do not disregard their own interest, to be actuated at the same time by a benevolent regard to the public welfare. It is "for good" that they are appointed.

To the views we have expressed, of the subordination of the people to their civil rulers, it may be objected, that according to the genius of our government, the people are the sovereigns, while rulers, or officers of government, are the servants. This is true of the people in their collective capacity with respect to the appointment of their officers; but it is not true of the people in their individual capacity with reference to their officers when appointed. The ordinance of man, upon that event, becomes the ordinance of God; and the law of God requires subjection, respect, and obedience to those raised to official stations—as much under our republican form of government, as it did under a monarchical form.

(c.) *Duties of Citizens, or Subjects.*

657. (1.) In general, *obedience, respect, and support*, are the duties which subjects owe to the government and the laws. Society cannot subsist without government, which is an institution of God, and, as such, demands respect and support. *It is a great mistake to suppose that a man is at liberty to do what he pleases.* In a wilderness he may enjoy this liberty, but whenever he enters into society, he joins those who have equal liberty with himself; and therefore it becomes necessary for the good of the whole, that each be restrained from injuring his neighbor, either by his actions or omissions. All restraint, indeed, beyond this, is despotic; but there is no despotism in preventing a man from robbing or killing his neighbor, from wronging or slandering him, from endeavoring to subvert the constitution of the society to which he be-

longs. There is no despotism in making every man contribute to bear the burden of the community, or obliging him to obey those laws which have been devised and enacted for the benefit of all.

Liberty, in society, never can exist, at the expense of justice, order, and morality.

*A good citizen* always obeys and respects the laws of the land, and honors its constituted authorities, and encourages others to do likewise. No selfish motives, no private or party considerations will lead him to disparage the character or embarrass the administration of any in power, by exaggerating faults or misrepresenting intentions.

*When he is persuaded that public officers are in error, or that they are pursuing improper or dangerous measures,* he has a right, and it may be his duty, to give full utterance to his convictions with regard to them, but he must do so with a sacred regard to conscience, to truth, to justice, and to the good of his country.

He must remember that God has thrown a degree of sacredness round the *office* and *functions* of the civil magistrate and legislator, although there is generally too little sacredness belonging both to the character and conduct of public functionaries. The sacredness of official station, and the importance of due honor being attached to the institution of civil government, impart great criminality to the abusive treatment, too common in this land, toward our public men. No arts of deception, falsehood, and slander, however mean or infamous, are refrained from by too many of our public presses, in animadverting, for party purposes, upon official conduct.

An apostle was directed "to put men in mind to be subject to principalities and powers, *to obey magistrates*, to be ready to every good work, *to speak evil of no man, to be no brawlers, but gentle*, showing all meekness to all men." American citizens, editors and newspaper writers especially, need to be "put in mind" of this divine prescription.

To every citizen the duty belongs to "render to all their dues, *honor to whom honor*;" and it is well that they should keep before them these divine declarations: "The Lord knoweth how to reserve the unjust to the day of judgment to be punished; but chiefly them that *despise*

*government, and are not afraid to speak evil of dignities.*" "Thou shalt not speak evil of the rulers of thy people."

The wrong doings of rulers are not to be countenanced, nor concealed ; they ought to be *suitably* exposed, and one of the great benefits derived from many of our newspapers is, that they help to guard our public offices from perversion and corruption, by holding the faults of their incumbents before the public eye in a becoming manner. But this is far from being true of all. There is a respect due to men in office *for their office' sake*, even in exposing their faults. These ought to be exposed in a way to avoid, as far as possible, degrading the dignity of their stations.

658. (2.) Every male citizen of full age, in this republic, has an important and solemn duty to perform, at regular intervals, at the BALLOT-BOX. He must do what he lawfully can *to procure the election of competent and righteous men to office*, from the chief magistrate down to the lowest town officer. It was the good advice of Jethro to the great lawgiver of the Hebrews, to provide out of all the people, *able men, such as fear God, men of truth, hating covetousness*, and to place *such* over the nation ; and Moses, by divine sanction, did as Jethro so wisely recommended. In later times, and in the more popular forms of the government of that people, when they became negligent and corrupt in the election of their rulers, God turned his indignation, as he had threatened, against them. It was a divine injunction, which fell from the lips of one of their best kings when dying, "*He that ruleth over men must be just, ruling in the fear of God.*" Of course, all who, *by neglect*, or *by improper votes*, allow or aid the elevation of bad or weak men to office, are guilty of sin against God, and of treason against the state. They expose their beloved country to imminent hazard, for, "*when the righteous are in authority, the people rejoice ; but when the wicked beareth rule, the people mourn.*" "Woe unto thee, O land, when thy king (or magistrate, or legislator) is a child." "The wicked walk on every side when vile men are exalted."

In the use of the elective franchise, men in our republic should not regard party spirit, party politics, selfish ends, instead of the cause of righteousness and the good



of the nation. They should understand, and govern their conduct by the sentiment, that universal suffrage, rightly exercised, is one of the greatest of human blessings; abused, one of the greatest of curses. Monarchy itself is better than democracy, unless virtue and discretion preside at the polls.

Says S. G. Goodrich: "If the people refuse to vote, the great design of our government fails; the people are not represented, and therefore we have the government of a part, and not a government of the whole. If a man refuse to vote, how can he be sure that bad men will not assemble at the polls and put in bad rulers? He who stays away from the polls is answerable for all the evil consequences which may follow from his neglect.

"A man is bound to use the same *good judgment*—the same *common sense* in acting for the people, as in acting for himself. A man is bound to use the same *vigilance* in acting for his country, as in acting for himself. A man is bound to be as *honest* in acting for his country, as in acting for himself; *to cast his ballot for his country, and not for himself* (or for his party). There is a sad looseness in society, both in thought and action, respecting politics. It is a wicked and vicious maxim, that 'all is fair in politics.'"

It is not here maintained that none but professedly religious men are to be elected to office; for it often happens that a man not professing religion, yet of moral honesty and integrity, may possess all the requisite, and even superior qualifications for an office; but still Christian principle is very desirable, for, without this, other qualifications often render men in office the more dangerous. Hence we are required to pray for our rulers.

659. (3.) There has grown up among us, of late, great contempt of constitutional, of official, and even of private rights and interests; a tendency to mobocracy, and riot, and anarchy; an increasing impatience of all subordination; a pernicious denial of the divine origin and sanction of civil government, and a bold assertion of the preëminence of individual rights: that inbred sentiment of respect for superiors in office and rank, which is the support of all virtue, religion, and government, is in danger of being utterly broken down; and unless we reform, it will come

to pass that no *respectable* man will *accept* of our offices, and moreover, if we countenance this vulgar contempt of rulers, a large portion of voters will in their wisdom judge that *contemptible* men are the *right sort* of men for rulers.

Let the *conduct* of our citizens say that rulers are *men to be respected*; then will the sentiment, already advocated, prevail, that none ought to be elected but men *worthy* of respect.

660. (4.) In the proper *support* of government and order, there are several particular duties it may be expedient to refer to: the paying of *taxes* and *custom-house duties*; the rendering of *military service*, when the condition of the country requires it; serving on *juries*, rendering *testimony* in civil courts, when called upon to do so for the maintenance of justice, &c.

661. (5.) It is made the duty of citizens to *pray for their rulers*. We are not only to cease to speak evil of them, but we are to pray for them, that they may be good men, and become better, and wiser, and more useful men in the stations to which they are elevated, and that, under their administration, and through their influence, all under their control may become better men, and the condition of our country in all respects be improved and rendered more prosperous. This accords with the law of the Scriptures. "I exhort," says Paul, "that first of all, supplications and prayers, intercessions and giving of thanks, be made for *all* men; for *kings*" (or, in this country, for the *President*), "and for *all that are in authority*, that we may lead quiet and peaceable lives, in all godliness and honesty."

By pursuing this heaven-appointed course, we should learn to entertain feelings of great kindness and respect for our rulers; we should be more conscientious in their election to office; we should derive greater benefits from their official labors; and we should add much to their happiness and our own.

662. (6.) Prayer for rulers will suggest *prayer for the subjects, or citizens*, that the latter may be led to the discharge of all those duties which appertain to them in their civil capacity and relations. The duty of prayer for magistrates and citizens is one of the most important and sublime duties of an enlightened, liberal, and Chris-

tian patriotism; and it cannot be neglected without personal guilt, and public mischief.

[For the greater part of this account of the duties of citizens and rulers, we are indebted to Winslow on Civil Duties, to which, for a fuller account, reference may, with great advantage, be made. We are indebted, also, to Professor Dick's Lectures, and to Burn's Christian Philosophy, and to the other authors referred to in the article.]

### VIII. *Duties of Patriotism.*

“Breathes there the man, with soul so dead,  
Who never to himself hath said,  
This is my own, my native land!  
Whose heart hath ne'er within him burned,  
As home his footsteps he hath turned,  
From wandering on a foreign strand?”

663. Christianity encourages patriotism so far as is consistent with general benevolence. If it encouraged it to a greater extent, it would injure its claims to be regarded as a system *for the world*. Christianity is designed to benefit not a community, but the world. The promotion of the interests of one community by injuring those of another, it utterly rejects as wrong. The universality of benevolence which Christianity inculcates, both in its essential character and in its precepts, is incompatible with that patriotism which would benefit our own community at the expense of general benevolence. Patriotism, as it is often advocated, is a low and selfish principle, a principle wholly unworthy of that enlightened and expanded philanthropy which religion proposes.

664. Patriotism, truly defined, is that affection to our country, which, while it respects as sacred the rights and the welfare of *every* land, of *every* foreign individual, teaches us to manifest, within the limits of justice, special affection to our own country, in proportion to the special ties by which we are united with the region that gave us birth.

665. There are several forms of patriotism that are unjust, unlawful, unchristian.

(1.) The patriotism of the *Jews*, in the time of Christ, which impelled them to abominate every other nation as accursed, and to refuse to render them even the slightest good office.

(2.) The patriotism of the *Greeks*, which despised the rest of mankind as ignorant barbarians.

(3.) The patriotism of the *Romans*, whose ambitious

love of conquest for the supposed glory of their country, stimulated them to bloody and cruel efforts to enslave the world.

(4.) The patriotism of more *modern nations*, so much boasted of, which leads men to seek the aggrandizement of their country, regardless of the morality of the means by which that aggrandizement is to be accomplished; which fosters party spirit, engenders strife and every evil passion, encourages slavery, and excites one part of the human race to murder and extirpate the other.

666. On the other hand, Christianity does not encourage the doctrine of being "a citizen of the world," and of paying no more regard to our own community than to any other. Such a doctrine is not rational; because, it opposes the exercise of natural feelings, and because if it were attempted to be reduced to practice, it would destroy private affections without producing universal philanthropy.

The Bible, while it teaches us to cherish good-will to all, teaches also a *special* good-will to those near, and related to us by particular ties: "As we have, therefore, opportunity, let us do good to *all* men, *especially* unto them who are of the household of faith." "If any provide not *for his own*, and *especially for those of his own house*, he hath denied the faith."

All this is perfectly rational and natural, as we have asserted. Since the helpless and those who need assistance must obtain it somewhere, where can they so rationally look for it, as from those with whom they are connected in society? If these do not exercise benignity, who will? And as to the dictate of nature, it is a law and impulse of nature that a man shall provide for his own.

*Proper Mode in which Patriotism should be exercised.*

667. He is the truest patriot who benefits his own country without diminishing the welfare of another. For which reason, those who induce improvements in the administration of justice, in the maxims of governing, in the political constitution of the state; or those who extend and rectify the education, or in any other manner amend the moral, social, or religious condition of a people, possess incomparably higher claims to the praise of pa-



triotism than multitudes of those who receive it from the popular voice.

That patriotism which is manifested in political partisanship, or in military operations, is frequently of a very questionable kind: many are called patriots, of whom the motives and the actions are pernicious or impure. Men too frequently do not enter armies because they love their country, but because they want a living, or are pleased with a military life: and when they have entered, they do not fight because they love their country, but because fighting is their business, and because men will praise them for fighting manfully.

[Dymond's Essays; Horne's Introduction.]

IX.—*Duties of Ministers of the Gospel, and of the People of their Charge.*

668. The duty of those who have undertaken the important work of spiritual guides and teachers, is to deliver the doctrines and precepts, and other instructions of the Bible, in plain and strong terms; insisting on such things chiefly, as will be most conducive to the real and inward benefit of their hearers, and recommending them in the most prudent and persuasive manner; *seeking to please all men for their good*, to edification, but fearing no man in the full discharge of duty; and neither saying nor omitting anything, for the sake of applause, or any other temporal benefit, from the many or the few. It is their duty to instruct, exhort, and comfort all that are placed under their care, with sincerity, discretion, and tenderness, privately as well as publicly, so far as opportunity is afforded, and there is hope of doing good: watching for their souls as they that must give account. 2 Tim. iv. 2-5; 1 Pet. v. 2-4; 1 Thes. ii. 7-13.

It is also their duty to rule in the church of God with vigilance, humility, and meekness, *showing themselves, in all things, patterns of good works*—thus endeavoring to keep their flock in the right way, and to bring them back when they have wandered from it.

Would I describe a preacher, such as Paul,  
Were he on earth, would hear, approve, and own,  
Paul should himself direct me. I would trace  
His master-strokes, and draw from his design.  
I would express him simple, grave, sincere;  
In doctrine, incorrupt; in language, plain,  
And plain in manner; decent, solemn, chaste,

And natural in gesture ; much impressed  
Himself, as conscious of his awful charge,  
And anxious mainly that the flock he feeds  
May feel it too ; affectionate in look,  
And tender in address, as well becomes  
A messenger of grace to guilty men.

COWPER.

669. (1.) It is the duty of their people to attend constantly and seriously on religious worship and instruction, at the appointed seasons, as a sacred ordinance designed by heaven for their spiritual enjoyment.

(2.) It is their duty, individually, to bear a due proportion, according to their means, and, more, if it be necessary (as is often the case through the penuriousness or indifference of others), in supporting the regular ministration of the Gospel ; so that their minister may not be embarrassed in his spiritual duties by unavoidable anxiety and care about his temporal subsistence. His salary should be promptly and fully paid—both justice and religion equally require this to be done. Gal. vi. 6 ; 1 Cor. ix. 7-15.

(3.) It is also their duty to consider impartially and carefully what they hear from their minister in his official capacity, and to believe and practice what they are convinced they ought : to observe with due regard the rules established for decent order and edification in the church, and pay such respect, in word and deed, to those who minister to them in holy things, as the interest and honor of religion require ; accepting and encouraging the well meant services of their ministers, and bearing charitably with their imperfections and failings. [Secker's Lectures.]

#### X. *Duties connected with the various stages of Human Life.*

##### (a.) *Duties of the Young.*

670. It is the duty of youth to *begin early to give serious attention to habits and conduct.* The honor or infamy, the happiness or misery of men, depends much upon the care and wisdom practiced in early life. Youth is the best season for the acquirement of virtuous habits.

671. The *virtues most necessary to be cultivated in youth,* are—

(1.) *Piety to God*, and reverence for all that is sacred, both as a foundation to good morals, and as a disposition particularly graceful and becoming to youth.

(2.) *Modesty and docility, reverence of parents, and*

*submission to superiors* in knowledge, in station, and in years.

(3.) *Sincerity, candor, and truth* are to be carefully practiced; while artifice, deceit, meanness, and dissimulation, are to be avoided by every youth.

(4.) Youth is a very proper and favorable season to cultivate the *benevolent and humane affections*; and to form the habit of "doing all things to others, according as they wish that others should do to them."

(5.) The *manners of youth* should be distinguished by that *courtesy* which springs not so much from studied politeness as from a mild and gentle heart. Manners should be simple and natural.

(6.) *Temperance in pleasure* is peculiarly important to youth; this consists in so pursuing it as not to hurt themselves or others.

(7.) *Diligence, industry, and proper improvement of time*, are material duties of the young. By them are habits of industry most easily acquired, and to none are they more important as a source of improvement and of pleasure, and as a safeguard against vice and consequent ruin.

The *acquisition of useful knowledge* is one of the most honorable occupations of youth; the desire of it discovers a liberal mind.

*Useful industry is the law of our being*: it is the demand of Nature, of reason, and of God.

(8.) It is too common with the young, even when they resolve to tread the path of virtue and honor, to set out with a presumptuous confidence in themselves. Such are the dangers and difficulties of their path that they need peculiarly the aid of their Heavenly Father, and should seek it daily by humble prayer, and a spirit of dependence.

[Dr. H. Blair.]

(b.) *On the Duties which belong to Middle Age.*

672. (1.) The first duty of those who are become men, is, to *put away the frivolities, follies, and levities of youth*.

(2.) Middle age is the season when we are expected to display the fruits which education in youth had prepared and ripened. Every man is expected to contribute actively his just share to the public good, by discharging the duties which belong to all the relations of life. Idle-

ness is the bane and corrupter of youth; but particularly is it the bane and the dishonor of middle age.

Middle age, as well as youth, has its dangers. The love of pleasure in youth is succeeded by the passion for gain or power, which too often absorbs the whole soul and debases the character.

(3.) It is also the duty of those in middle life to lay a foundation for comfort in old age, which they hope to see. For old age, as for every other thing, a certain preparation is requisite; and that preparation consists chiefly in three particulars: in the acquisition of knowledge, of friends, and of virtue.

(4.) Among the measures thus taken for the latter scenes of life, no one should forget to put his worldly affairs in order in due time. This is a duty which every one owes to his character, to his family, or to those, whoever they be, that are to succeed him.

To live long, ought not to be our favorite wish, so much as to live usefully and well.

#### *c.) Duties of Old Age.*

As in the day of human life there is a morning and a noon, so it is fit that there should be an evening also, when the lengthening shadows shall admonish us of approaching night. In these circumstances—

673. (1.) The duty of the old is to consider that all the seasons of life have their several trials allotted to them, and that to bear the infirmities of age with becoming patience, is as much their duty, as is that of the young to resist the temptation of youthful pleasure.

(2.) It is their duty not to allow themselves to entertain a peevish disgust at the manners, and to pass a malignant censure upon the innocent enjoyments of the young. In order to make the two extremes of life to unite in amicable society, it is greatly to be wished, that the young would look forward and consider that they shall one day be old; and that the old would look back, and, remembering that they once were young, make proper allowances for the temper and manners of youth.

(3.) The aged should guard against a miserly covetousness, arising often from an apprehension of want, as they feel the weakness of old age coming upon them.

(4.) The voice of nature calls the aged to leave to



others the bustle and contest of the world, and gradually to disengage themselves from a burden which begins to exceed their strength; retiring more and more from public observation to domestic scenes and serious thoughts.

(5.) A part of the duty of the aged consists in studying to be useful to the race who are to succeed them. To them it belongs to impart to the young the fruit of their long experience; to warn them of the various dangers of life; and, both by precept and example, to form them to piety and virtue.

Old age never appears with greater dignity, than when, tempered with mildness, and enlivened with good-humor, it acts as the guide and the patron of youth.

(6.) In the midst of their endeavors to be useful to others, the aged should not forget those religious employments which their own state particularly requires.

“’Tis greatly wise to talk with our past hours,  
And ask them what report they bore to heaven;  
And how they might have borne more welcome news.”

In silent and thoughtful meditation, it becomes them to walk as on the shore of that vast ocean upon which they are soon to embark, and also to make a frequent retrospect of the long journey of life, in order to notice and extol the watchful care and undeserved beneficence of God, who had thus far conducted them. [Dr. H. Blair.]

#### XI. *Effects of the universal Violation of the Fifth Precept.*

674. Were this precept reversed, or universally violated, every social tie would be torn asunder, every principle of subordination destroyed, every government overturned, and the whole assembly of human beings converted into a discordant mass of lawless banditti.

[Professor Dick's Lectures.]

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595. What is the general design of the Fifth Commandment?

596. How may the relations of society be classified, in regard to their origin or basis?

597. Relate the anecdote of the school-boy?

598. What, in a general view, is implied in the command to honor our parents?

599. What is involved in the duty of love to our parents?

600. How may the duty of filial reverence be explained?

601. What is the duty of children residing at home with respect to the regulations of the family?

602. What is the duty of children in regard to the misconduct of parents?

603. What illustrations of the duty of kindness to parents may be added?

604. What may be said concerning the duty of children to consult their parents?
605. What is the nature and extent of that obedience which children are under obligation to render their parents?
606. What is implied in the duty of submission to family discipline?
607. What are some of the motives to the performance of filial duties?
608. What duties do the children of a family owe to each other?
609. What general view may be given of parental duties?
610. What important prerequisites are there to the successful and proper discharge of parental duties?
611. What are some of the branches of parental duty?
612. What may be said respecting the duty of maintenance?
613. What may be said respecting the duty of affording scholastic instruction?
614. What remarks are made respecting the selection of a school?
615. What remarks concerning the just idea of education?
616. What remarks are offered upon a due regard to the health of children?
617. What notions concerning wealth and worldly show ought to be instilled early into the minds of children?
618. What is said of the forming of industrious habits?
619. What is said of economy?
620. What of regular employment?
621. What of generosity?
622. What of prudence?
623. What of the education of circumstances?
624. What of the responsibility of fathers?
625. How soon should religious instruction begin, and how conducted?
626. What anecdote is related of Thelwall and Coleridge?
627. What are important parts of religious education?
628. Is discipline a part of parental duty; and how should it be conducted?
629. Is correction an essential part of good discipline?
630. Remarks upon corporeal punishment?
631. Rules for infliction of chastisement?
632. Caution to parents not to foster certain propensities in children?
633. Robert Hall's reproof?
634. Necessity of a good parental example?
635. Necessity of careful parental inspection?
636. Duty of prayer on the part of parents?
637. Anecdote of Earl Roden?
638. To what class of duties will these most nearly correspond?
639. What prominent objects does it fall within the duty of the instructor to promote?
640. What duties does he owe to himself in the character of an instructor?
641. What prominent duties does he owe his scholars?
642. What duties does the pupil owe to an instructor?
643. What preliminary remarks are offered?
644. What does the duty of justice to servants demand?
645. What does the duty of kindness to servants demand?
646. What duties of religion do masters owe to their servants?
647. What, in general terms, are the duties of servants to their employers?
648. By what is the extent of their obedience limited?
649. Upon what are duties of this class founded?
650. Is civil government a human or a divine institution?

651. What, according to Scripture, is the design and proper scope of civil government?

652. The question here arises, how far civil rulers are to be obeyed—how far the duty of submission extends?

653. To whom belongs the right of deciding when the duty of obedience ceases, and that of resistance to civil authority begins?

654. How far has civil government a right to interfere in matters of religion?

655. What is the history of the contest between the rights of civil rulers and the rights of conscience in the mind of the subject?

656. In view of these preliminary discussions, what appear to be the duties of rulers?

657. What is the first class of duties belonging to a subject or a citizen?

658. Duty of a citizen at the ballot-box?

659. Are there any circumstances in our country at the present time which give great importance to the duties just described?

660. Duties necessary to the proper support of government and order?

661. Duty of prayer for rulers?

662. Duty of prayer for fellow-citizens?

663. How far does Christianity encourage particular patriotism?

664. What is the true definition of patriotism?

665. What unjust, unlawful, unchristian forms of patriotism may be noticed that conflict with the definition just given?

666. Does Christianity, on the other hand, encourage the doctrine of being "a citizen of the world," and of paying no more regard to our own community than to every other?

667. What is the proper mode in which patriotism should be exercised?

668. What, briefly, is the duty of the former?

669. What brief account can you give of the duties which a people owe to their religious minister?

670. What is a primary duty of the young?

671. What virtues is it peculiarly necessary for the young to cultivate?

672. What duties peculiarly befit those in middle life?

673. What duties befit old age?

674. Were this precept to be reversed, or universally violated, what scenes of anarchy and confusion would ensue?

#### SIXTH COMMANDMENT.

*"Thou shalt not kill."*

675. Its *prominent design* is, to guard human life against violence, to render it a sacred thing, which is not to be touched but by Him whose gift it is, and who has a right to resume it at his pleasure.

676. A distinction is made between it and the life of the lower animals, in one of the precepts delivered to Noah. Man holds a higher rank in the scale of being; his life is therefore of much greater value, and to take it unjustly away, is a crime which ought not to pass with impunity. "Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed, for in the image of God made He man."

I. *Killing of Animals.*

677. In itself the precept is unlimited, and prohibits the taking of the life of any animal. Nor has man any right to limit it to the human family. None but God himself, the author of life, can give authority, in any case, to kill.

He has allowed us, however, by express statute, to take away the life of the lower animals, when they are necessary for our food, or when they are hostile and dangerous to us. This permission was first granted, immediately after the flood, to Noah and his descendants: "God said to Noah and his sons, everything that moveth shall be meat for you; even as the green herb have I given you all things." Without such a positive grant from the Creator, man could have had no more right to take away the life of an ox, or a sheep, than he has to imbrue his hands in the blood, or to feast on the flesh of his fellow-men. Accordingly, the Antediluvians, notwithstanding their enormous crimes, never feasted on the flesh of animals.

Dr. Dwight has hence clearly shown that infidels, who deny the divine revelation of the Scriptures, can plead no right to eat the flesh of animals.

The authority for killing animals dangerous to our own lives is found in Genesis ix. "Surely your blood of your lives, will I require; at the hand of every *beast* will I require it; and at the hand of man." Under the Jewish law, "the ox which gored a man or woman was commanded to be stoned." This law implies that ferocious and dangerous animals may be anticipated in the act of destroying human life, by being themselves put to death.

678. Although the inferior animals are subjected to our use by their Creator, no permission is granted us to treat them with neglect, harshness, or cruelty, or to kill them for the sake of sport and amusement. And, therefore, the man who wantonly takes away the lives of birds, hares, fishes, and other animals, for the mere gratification of a taste for hunting or fishing, can scarcely be exculpated from the charge of a breach of this commandment.

If man's convenience, health,  
Or safety interfere, his rights and claims  
Are paramount, and must extinguish theirs.  
Else they are all—the meanest things that are—  
As free to live, and to enjoy that life,  
As God was free to form them at the first,  
Who in his sovereign wisdom made them all.

COWPER.



II. *Capital Punishment.*

679. Upon this question a diversity of opinion has long existed, and still exists. Several able volumes have lately appeared on both sides of the question, whether it is expedient or right to inflict the punishment of death even for the greatest of crimes against man—that of murder.

The crime of murder, is taking away a person's life, with design; and without proper reason or authority.

The divine law concerning murder has already been quoted from Gen. ix., and requires, as has been generally thought, that the murderer should be put to death: "Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed."

The national code of the Jews inserted, by divine authority, the punishment of death for a few other crimes beside murder. This punishment was not merely permitted, but was *required* to be inflicted. In the case of murder, the punishment of death was affixed to it *before* the formation of the Jewish commonwealth; it was required to be inflicted by *man*, without reference to any particular civil polity; and the *reason assigned* for this punishment is applicable in all ages, in all states of society, and in all countries; "for in the image of God made He man."

Now the question that ought to settle the whole dispute, in regard at least to the proper mode of disposing of the crime of murder, is this: "Will not the Judge of the whole earth do right?" He has decided that such a punishment is due to murder, from *man* to *man*; he re-enacted the law under the Jewish polity, of which He was the civil as well as religious head; he imposed a similar punishment for other crimes; and He is the supreme disposer, because the author, of human life. It would appear, then, that other nations, as well as the Jews, are required to punish murder with death, and are *not at liberty* to impose a milder penalty. To inflict such a penalty cannot be considered wrong or inexpedient, without impugning both the wisdom and the justice of God.

680. The fear of sudden and violent death conveys more terror than any that enters the human heart.

"The weariest and most loathed worldly life  
That age, ache, penury, and imprisonment  
Can lay on nature, is a paradise  
To what we fear of death."

It startles and shocks the sovereign instinct of nature; imprisonment does not. It excludes earthly hope: in the solitary cell, Hope sits by the prisoner, and makes his lot a cheerful one. Pardon, revolution, a thousand incidents, may open the door of the prison, but not of the grave.

Nay, why is it that this punishment is opposed by a puling philanthropy? *Because it is terrible.* For this very reason, all who would not light the torch and whet the knife of the midnight murderer, all who would not have the dark form of Murder bending over the couch of innocence, and the fear of it mingling with every moment of the life of weakness, desire to see it retained. It is better that guilt should die than that innocence should bleed. God makes death the wages of sin; and the pity that would repeal the law is unwise, if it be not guilty.

[N. American.]

It is but a short time since that a man convicted of murder in the state of New Hampshire, or Vermont, declared that he would not have committed it, if he had not supposed that imprisonment, only, would have been the penalty. Even with all the terrors of the death-penalty, how astonishingly frequent is the crime of murder. Would it be safe to commute it for a milder punishment?

681. It brings upon one of our brethren of the human family, what human nature abhors and dreads most; it cuts him off from all the enjoyments of this life at once, and sends him into another, for which possibly he was not yet prepared; it defaces the image, and defeats the design of God; it overturns the great purpose of human government and laws—mutual safety; it robs society of a member, and consequently of a part of its strength; it robs the relations, friends, and dependents of the person destroyed, of every benefit and pleasure which else they might have had from him; and the injury done in all these respects has the terrible aggravation, that it cannot be recalled.

Most wisely, therefore, has our Creator surrounded *murder* with a peculiar terror; that nature, as well as reason, may deter from it every one who is not utterly abandoned to the worst of wickedness; and most justly has he appointed the sons of *Noah*, that is, all mankind, to punish death with death. And that nothing may protect so daring an offender, he enjoined the *Jews*, in the

chapter which follows the Ten Commandments: "If a man come presumptuously upon his neighbor to slay him with guile, thou shalt take him from mine altar that he may die."

682. God has discouraged murder, by teaching men in his providence, that *in most cases it shall not escape detection*. "Such a secret," says Daniel Webster, "can be safe nowhere. The whole creation of God has neither nook nor corner, where the guilty can bestow it and say it is safe. Not to speak of that eye which glances through all disguises, and beholds everything as in the splendor of noon; such secrets of guilt are never safe from detection even by man. Providence hath so ordained, and doth so govern things, that those who break the great law of heaven, by shedding man's blood, seldom succeed in avoiding discovery. A thousand eyes turn at once to explore every man, every thing, every circumstance, connected with the time and place: a thousand ears catch every whisper: a thousand excited minds intensely dwell on the scene; shedding all their light, and ready to kindle the slightest circumstance into a blaze of discovery.

"Meantime, the guilty soul cannot keep its own secret: it is false to itself; or rather, it feels an irresistible impulse of conscience to be true to itself; it labors under its guilty possession, and knows not what to do with it. It must be confessed; it will be confessed: there is no refuge from confession but suicide; and suicide is confession."

Further, supposing, what seldom happens, that the murderer may escape judicial vengeance; yet what piercing reflections, what continual terrors and alarms must he carry about with him! And could he be hardened against these, it would only subject him the more inevitably to that future condemnation, from which nothing but the deepest repentance in this life can possibly exempt him. For *no murderer hath eternal life*; but they "shall have their part in the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone, which is the second death." 1 John iii. 15; Rev. xxi. 8.

But while murder *must* be punished with death, and there is authority given, from the example of the divine government over the Jews, to punish some other crimes

in the same manner, the general spirit of the Gospel and of reason seems to allow of milder punishments in other cases beside murder, when the safety of society may be equally well, or sufficiently guarded.

683. To render the punishment of murder, by death, lawful, "it is ever to be remembered, that even when the punishment of death is lawfully to be inflicted, it can be warrantably executed only by the magistrate; and by him, only when acting according to the decisions of law. Private individuals have no more right to interfere, than if the man condemned were innocent; and were they to lay violent hands on him, although proved to be guilty, and rightfully condemned, they would themselves become murderers. Nor can the judge lawfully condemn any man, whatever he may think concerning the rectitude of the decision, unless, upon adequate legal testimony, fairly exhibited in open court, and in exact conformity to the modes of trial by law established. Neither can the executive magistrate warrantably do anything, in a case of this nature, beside merely executing the sentence of the judge; whether he esteems that sentence just or unjust. The time, the manner, and the circumstances of execution, ordered by law, he is bound exactly to observe. A criminal, although condemned to death, may, instead of being executed, be murdered; and that as truly as any other man. The sheriff, also, can easily lay aside the character of a magistrate, and assume that of a murderer. At the same time, all magistrates, in whatever station they act, are indispensably prohibited from the exercise of hatred, or revenge, in every form and degree against the criminal."

[Dr. Dwight; Dick's Lectures.]

### III. *Taking of Life in Self-defense.*

684. When a man is attacked, he is at liberty to defend himself; and if, in the conflict, the intending murderer shall fall, no moralist would say that the defender was guilty of murder, provided that he honestly thought that no means of saving himself were left, but the taking away of the life of the aggressor. Assuredly he was not bound to be more careful of the life of his enemy than his own.



In such a case the law can afford him no protection; he must use the power which God has given him, to preserve the most valuable of all his possessions, to ward off an injury which can never be repaired. Human laws accord the same right in defense of our property, when an attempt is made to take it from us by violence.

#### IV. Wars.

685. To the question, how far wars, that destroy so many lives, are consistent with the Sixth Commandment, the plain answer is, that they are justifiable only on the plea of self-defense; that we may make war and destroy our enemies when we are unjustly attacked, for we are acting the same part, on a more extended scale, with the individual who resists the housebreaker, the highwayman, and the assassin: but that wars of aggression, wars which have no just cause in the conduct of our antagonist, are unlawful; and that, in the sight of God, every life which is taken away in the prosecution of them is a murder.

An incalculable amount of guilt is accumulated, therefore, upon all the nations of the world; and dreadful will the reckoning be with the rulers of the earth, when God shall make inquiry after blood.

That war, *in itself*, is not unlawful in all cases, may be inferred from the fact, that various wars, as we learn from Scripture, have been "commanded, approved, and miraculously prospered by God himself; and it is impossible that God should either command, or approve of that which is wrong."

686. Defensive war cannot entirely be dispensed with; for the oppressive and covetous dispositions of mankind would lead them to overrun, rob, and destroy the nation that should act on the principle that even defensive war is unlawful.

#### *Causes of Aggressive and Unjust Wars.*

687. (1.) There is a general *indifference or ignorance respecting the injustice and criminality of war* in most cases, *arising from want of inquiry*, and from familiarity with warlike preparations and circumstances. War is too generally regarded as a matter to be expected in the ordinary course of events.

(2.) Another cause of our complacency with war, and, therefore, another cause of war itself, consists in that *insensibility to human misery* which the custom induces. They who are shocked at a single murder on the highway, hear with indifference of the slaughter of a thousand on the field. If a murder is committed, the public prints speak of it as a shocking and horrible affair: if five thousand, and especially if fifty thousand of an enemy are slaughtered by our own men, it is a brilliant, beautiful, glorious affair!

(3.) Nations are apt to be *haughty and irritable* in their intercourse with other nations. He that is prepared to be offended readily finds offenses. A jealous sensibility sees insults and injuries where sober eyes see nothing: the man who is always on the alert to discover trespasses on his *honor* or his rights, never fails to quarrel with his neighbors; and why should not the same be true of princes, presidents, cabinets, nations?

This *national honor* (says Dr. E. Mason), of which so many speak, is a very impalpable, intangible thing. What is it? Wherein does it consist? For my own part, I know of but *one standard of honor*, for an individual or nation; and that is *doing right*. Glory is essentially and eternally connected with right-doing; and shame is eternally and essentially connected with wrong-doing. Rather than my country should do wrong, I would give up everything in dispute. It is better, more honorable, more ennobling to a nation, as well as an individual, to yield to an unjust claim, than to secure even admitted rights by unjust means.

(4.) War is a source of pecuniary *profit* to numerous individuals, and establishes *professions which are very convenient*, particularly in some countries, to the middle and higher ranks of life.

(5.) It gratifies the *ambition* of public men, civil and military, and serves the purposes of private and state policy, that are not often revealed to the national eye. Cabinets often talk in public of invasions of right, or breaches of treaty, of the support of honor, of the necessity of retaliation, when these motives have no influence on their determinations.

(6.) *Notions of glory* are attached to warlike affairs; which glory, however, is factitious and impure. The

glories of battle, and of those who perish in it, or who return in triumph to their country, are favorite topics of declamation with the historian, the biographer, and the poet. "As long as mankind," says Gibbon, "shall continue to bestow more liberal applause on their destroyers than on their benefactors, the thirst of military glory will ever be the vice of the most exalted characters."

688. It is evidently our duty to endeavor to avoid or remove these causes of war, since they do not constitute any justification of an evil so enormous.

### *Consequences of War.*

689. (1.) Every battle entails *agonizing sufferings, and irreparable deprivations upon private life*. There are often thousands thus made to weep in unpitied and unnoticed secrecy, whom the world does not see. The loss of a protector or a friend is ill repaid by empty glory.

(2.) *The great destruction of human life* in protracted wars is to be considered. From 1145 to 1815, an interval of six hundred and seventy years, England was at war with France two hundred and sixty-six years: if to this be added wars with other countries, it is estimated that one half of the last six or seven centuries has been spent in war by that country. It is impossible now to compute how many millions of men these centuries of slaughter have cut off; and still more difficult to estimate the sum total of the misery of their deaths, and of the numberless bereavements thus occasioned.

Since the origin of the race of man, it has been estimated that more than fourteen thousand millions have been destroyed by war. *One tenth of our race* have been slaughtered by the demon of war. What a horrible fact for contemplation is it, if this estimate be correct, that *eighteen worlds* of human population have been massacred, and cut to pieces in mutual wars, as if they had been made for no better end than to be butchered by one another! For other illustrations of the evils of war, consult Dick's *Philosophy of Religion*, chap. iv. sec. 1.

(3.) *The enormous expense* of war is another item to be considered. The *nine years' war*, beginning with 1739, cost England over *three hundred millions of dollars*. WAR IS THE GRAND CAUSE OF NATIONAL DEBTS, and brings upon a people the burden of heavy taxation, in addition

to many other burdens too grievous to be borne. Beside, national conflicts put a stop to the productive industry of the nations concerned, because it turns the public mind to other enterprises. The mental activity employed is engaged in destroying, not in promoting human happiness. War takes away from the means of national advancement, because it prostrates all those branches of human industry which are not needed in carrying on the war. The enormous waste of means is so much taken from every department of business. The question is too much neglected by statesmen, whether a greater mass of human suffering, and a greater loss of human enjoyment is not occasioned by the pecuniary distresses of a war, than any ordinary advantages of a war compensate.

The *waste of war* has been beautifully represented in the following terms: "Give me the money that has been spent in war, and I will purchase every foot of land on the globe. I will clothe every man, woman, and child in an attire that kings and queens might be proud of. I will build a school-house in every valley over the earth. I will supply that school-house with a competent teacher. I will build an academy in every town, and endow it—a college in every state, and fill it with able professors. I will crown every hill with a church consecrated to the promulgation of the gospel of peace. I will support in its pulpit an able teacher of righteousness, so that on every Sabbath morning the chime on one hill shall answer to the chime on another, around the earth's broad circumference, and the voice of prayer and the song of praise shall ascend as one universal offering to heaven."

(4.) But *war does more harm to the morals of men than even to their property and persons*. How enormous then must its mischiefs be! "War is a system out of which almost all the virtues are excluded, and in which nearly all the vices are incorporated."

The obedience to arbitrary power which war exacts of the subordinate officers and the soldiers, possesses more of the character of servility, and even of slavery, than we are accustomed to suppose.

Shakspeare, with his inimitable knowledge of life, makes Henry V., in addressing his troops, say, "And when the blast of war blows in our ears, then imitate the



action of the tiger!" In the track of a victorious army have been too often witnessed robberies, murders, violation of helpless females, beastly intoxication, and every species of enormity. In full keeping with this brutalizing spirit, Bonaparte is reported to have said, "The readiest way to govern men is by their *vices*, and if they have none, they must be taught to contract them." And the Duke of Wellington is reported to have said, "that a soldier has no business with principles, or a conscience; his only business being to obey orders." The latter individual, accordingly, as commander-in-chief of the British forces, has lately issued (1846) his order, abolishing and forbidding temperance societies through the entire army; his object, doubtless, being, to prepare the soldier, in case of war, so to be brutalized by intoxicating drinks, that in the blindness and madness of their excitement they may fight like demons. This is the spirit that led some of the French soldiers, in the war in Prussia, to amuse themselves with throwing children into the flames, and stabbing infants at their mothers' breasts.

[N. Y. Observer.]

Not only is war degrading and demoralizing to the soldier, but to the community that employs him. During a war, a whole people, in common with the soldier, become familiarized with the utmost excesses of enormity, and they exult in them, and thus the hearts of mankind are rendered callous to the sentiments of humanity and justice. Feelings of retaliation and revenge are fostered, and these are most opposite to Christianity. When a war is in contemplation, or has been commenced, its promoters animate their countrymen, by every artifice, to hatred, and animosity, and malignity. Under these circumstances Christianity cannot flourish. War and Christianity are like the opposite ends of a balance, of which one is depressed by the elevation of another.

[Dymond's Essays.]

5.) War, in most cases, cannot be justified as being a rational mode of settling national differences; which, after all the horrors of war have been experienced on both sides, must, in most cases, be settled by negotiation, treaty, or arbitration—methods of settlement that might, and should have been resorted to at first.

A perfect illustration of the *absurdity of war* is vividly

presented in the following account, by a Scotch writer, of a scene he once saw in Nithsdale.

*The Nithsdale Boys.*

690. Two boys from different schools met one fine day upon the ice. They eyed each other with rather jealous and indignant looks, and with defiance on each brow. "What are ye glowrin' at, Billy?" "What's that to you! I'll look where I have a mind, an' hinder me if you daur." A hearty blow was the return to this, and then a battle began. It being Saturday, all the boys of both schools were on the ice, and the fight instantly became general and desperate. I asked one of the party what they were pelting the others for. "O, naething at a', man; we just want to gie them a good thrashing." After fighting till they were quite exhausted, one of the principal heroes stepped up between, covered with blood, and his clothes with tatters, and addressed the belligerent parties thus: "Weel, I'll tell ye what we'll do wi' ye: if ye'll let us alane, we'll let ye alane." There was no more of it: the war was at an end, and the boys scampered away to their play.

I thought at the time (says the Scotch writer), and have often thought since, that that trivial affray was the best epitome of war in general that I had ever seen. Kings and ministers of state are just a set of grown up children, exactly like the children I speak of, with only this material difference, that instead of fighting out the needless quarrels they have raised, they sit in safety and look on, send out their innocent but servile subjects to battle, and then, after a waste of blood and treasure, are glad to make the boys' conditions, "If ye'll let us alane, we'll let ye alane."

Such being the absurdity, and such the criminality, and such the painful and hideous consequences of war, with grateful hearts we read in holy writ of those better times in prospect, when, in the language of Pope, borrowed from the Hebrew prophet—

"No more shall nation against nation rise,  
Nor ardent warriors meet with hateful eyes;  
Nor fields with gleaming steel be covered o'er,  
The brazen trumpets kindle rage no more;  
But useless lances into scythes shall bend,  
And the broad falchion in a ploughshare end."

V. *Suicide.*

691. The sixth precept is justly understood to forbid suicide; and for this reason: that we have not absolute power over our own life, but are bound to retain and employ it to the ends for which it was bestowed, till the gift is resumed by the Giver.

692. Disgust at life will not justify self-murder: because it can exist only in an ungrateful and vicious mind; nor can severe affliction, which, coming from the hand of God, it is our duty to bear with patience; nor can the apprehension of evil, which may not befall us, and to which, if it did come, we should be bound to submit without a murmur.

Life is an appointed time, measured out to us by the wisdom of God; it is a race which we must run till we arrive at the goal.

As we are not to commit violence against the image of God in the person of any of our fellow-men, so neither in our own: as we are not to rob the society to which we belong, or any part of it, of the service which any other of its members might do to it, we are not to rob it either of what *we* might do: as we are not to send any one else prematurely out of the world, we are not to send ourselves, but *wait* with patience *all the days of our appointed time, till our change come.*

If the sins which persons have committed prompt them to despair, they, of all others, instead of rushing into the presence of God by adding this dreadful one to them, should earnestly desire *space to repent*, which, by his grace, the worst of sinners may do, and be forgiven.

693. Beside the violation of the duties just specified, when persons, in any case, make way with themselves, they, by that act, arraign the constitution of things which God hath appointed; and refuse living where he hath put them to live—a very provoking instance of undutifulness, which is rendered peculiarly fatal by this circumstance, that, leaving usually no room for repentance, it leaves none for pardon: always excepting where it proceeds from a mind so disordered by a bodily disease as to be incapable of judging or acting reasonably; for God knows with certainty when this is the case and when not,

and will accordingly either make due allowances, or make none.

[Secker ; Professor Dick.

## VI. *Dueling.*

694. It may easily be shown that dueling is a flagrant breach of the Sixth Commandment. The challenge to a duel is a proposition to kill or be killed : it is given and accepted deliberately with such an understanding : deadly weapons are used, and at such short distances as may generally secure the horrible result : not unfrequently both parties in a duel mortally wound each other : professed duelists prepare themselves by long practice to engage in the work of killing an antagonist with facility and precision : the work of death in such cases is most commonly perpetrated with feelings of hatred and revenge : it is also done in most cases under very slight provocations.

In view of all these things it possesses attributes of a gross criminality, such as belong to few other kinds of murder. Wherever human life is deliberately taken away, otherwise than by public authority, there is murder. No other definition of murder can be admitted without letting in so much private violence, as to render society a scene of peril and bloodshed. But this definition makes dueling, murder.

695. Dueling, as a punishment, is *absurd* : because it is an equal chance, whether the punishment fall upon the offender, or the person offended.

Nor is it much better as a reparation ; it being difficult to explain in what the *satisfaction* consists, or how it tends to undo the injury, or to afford a compensation for the damage already sustained.

The truth is, it is not considered as either ; but simply as an expedient to prevent, in the view of a corrupt sentiment, the imputation of cowardice on receiving or giving an affront. Challenges are given and accepted, to preserve a duelist's reputation and reception among those who uphold what is falsely called the *law of honor*. For reasons already assigned, it might more properly be designated the LAW OF INFAMY—and deeply is it to be regretted that it had not been viewed as such by Alexander Hamilton and many other brilliant American citizens, who have sacrificed themselves to uphold its murderous demands.



Hence it becomes the duty of all, to discourage and condemn the practice of dueling—to brand it with infamy—and to uphold the laws of the land, which require the parties to it to be dealt with as murderers.

The law of God should stand, though the law of honor (falsely so called) should fall. There can be no honor in dishonoring and violating the law of God, which is the only sure basis of public and private happiness—the only correct standard of honorable feeling and of honorable action.

[Dwight and Paley.]

#### VII. *Other Prohibitions of the Sixth Precept.*

696. (1.) The grand prohibition is murder.

As to the *manner* in which murder is committed, whether a person do it directly himself, or employ another; whether he do it by force, or fraud, or color of justice; accusing falsely, or taking any undue advantage; these things make little further difference in the guilt, than that the most artful and studied way is generally the worst.

(2.) Not only the outward act of murder is prohibited, but *all the causes which lead to it*: such as, envy, malice, revenge, secret wishes of evil to others, and imprecations of evil, unjust and excessive anger, and fighting of every kind between man and man.

If we do a person no harm, yet intend or wish him harm, the apostle John has stigmatized the act as a species of murder: “*Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer.*” For indeed, hatred not only leads to murder, and too often, when indulged, produces it unexpectedly; but it is always, though perhaps for the most part in a lower degree, the very spirit of murder in the heart, and it is by our hearts that God will judge us.

Should our dislike of another not rise to fixed hatred and malice, yet if it rise to unjust anger, we are very criminal in our Savior’s view: “It was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not kill; and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgment. But I say unto you, that *whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause, shall be in danger of the judgment.*” (Matt. v. 21.) That is, whosoever is angry, either with persons that he ought not; or more vehemently, or sooner, or longer, than he ought to be, is guilty in some measure of that unchari-

tableness of which murder is the highest act, and liable to the punishment of it in the same proportion.

(3.) If a person does not directly design the death of another, yet if he designedly does what he knows or suspects may probably occasion it, he is, in proportion to such knowledge or suspicion, guilty. Nay, if he is only negligent in matters which may affect human life, or meddles with them when he has cause to think he understands them not, he is far from innocent; and there are several *professions and employments* in which these truths ought to be considered with peculiar seriousness and concern.

“The spirit of the precept plainly interdicts all those callings, occupations, and practices which are injurious to the health or safety of the community, such as the manufacture or sale of articles of diet or beverage which we have every reason to believe will be abused, to the hurt or death of men’s bodies, to say nothing of the effects upon the undying soul. In like manner all incompetent practice of the medical art; all competing trials of speed in steamboats; all pugilistic combats, and whatever goes to wound, cripple, or maim the body, and thus endanger life, comes fairly within the range of what is forbidden by the Sixth Commandment.” [Bush.]

(4.) If it be criminal to contribute in any manner toward taking away a person’s life immediately, it must be *criminal also to contribute anything toward shortening it*, which is taking it away gradually; whether by bringing any bodily disease upon him, or causing him any grief or anxiety of mind, or by what indeed will produce both, distressing him in his circumstances. Indeed, if we cause or procure any sort of hurt to another, though it hath no tendency to deprive him of life, yet if it makes any part of his life more or less uneasy, we deprive him so far of what makes it valuable to him, which is equivalent to taking so much of it away from him.

“*I hesitate not,*” says Dr. Dwight, “*to pronounce that unkindness, which, especially when exercised toward inferiors and dependents, wears upon the spirits, and often breaks the hearts of our fellow-creatures, to be a crime of the same nature as murder.*” In order to shorten human life, it is not necessary to use a bludgeon nor a pistol. Servants may be easily brought to an untimely grave by stinting them with respect to their necessary food, clothes,

lodging, or fuel ; or by a repetition of tasks, unreasonably burdensome. A delicate and susceptible child may be easily driven into a consumption by parental coldness, fretfulness, severity, the denial of necessary indulgences, or the exaction of undue compliances. Mere conjugal indifference may easily break the heart of an affectionate wife."

(5.) The command not to take away our own life, binds us to avoid not only direct suicide, but everything which has a tendency to bring our life to an untimely end ; as *peevishness, fretfulness, and discontent, immoderate grief, anxious care* about our worldly affairs, and labor, whether of mind or body, unnecessarily submitted to beyond our strength ; neglect of our bodies, by withholding due nourishment and clothing, and carelessness about our health ; *INTEMPERANCE IN EATING AND DRINKING*, and exposing ourselves to danger without a lawful call.

Where indeed necessity requires great hazards to be run by some persons for the good of others ; as in war, in extinguishing dangerous fires in several cases which might be named ; or where employments and professions which somebody must undertake, or when such diligence in any employment as men are by accidents really called to use, impair health and shorten life ; there, far from being thrown away, it is laudably spent in the service of God and man. But, for any person to bring on himself an untimely end by adventurous rashness, by ungoverned passion, by an immoderate anxiety, or by an obstinate or careless neglect of his own preservation, is unquestionably criminal. And, above all, doing it by debauchery or immoral excess, is a most effectual way of ruining soul and body at once.

(6.) However criminal it is to destroy or impair the life of the body, it must be more so to destroy or impair the eternal life, or happiness of the soul. If it be unlawful to kill or hurt the body, or to overlook men's worldly necessities ; much more is it to destroy or endanger the superior life of the soul, or in any way endanger it ; or even to suffer it to continue in danger if we have in our power the proper and likely means of delivering it.

[Secker.]

VIII. *Drunkenness.*

697. Drunkenness is treated under the sixth precept because, as we have hinted, it tends greatly to abbreviate the duration, and to promote the wretchedness of human life. Its criminality partakes therefore of that which belongs to suicide by an act of violence.

698. There are other circumstances upon which its criminality depends.

(1.) *It betrays to the practice of other sins.* Exciting the passions, it leads to acts of theft, robbery, assaults and bodily injury upon others, often to murder, lewdness, and other acts of profligacy. It prepares for almost any crime.

(2.) *It disqualifies men for the duties of their station,* both by the temporary disorder of their faculties, and at length by a constant incapacity and stupefaction. Hence—

(3.) There must be included a *waste of property.* This arises from impairing a man's powers of mind and body for profitable business; also from the consumption of time and of money in the process of drinking, and in the attendant circumstances.

(4.) The drunkard destroys his *reputation*, which according to Solomon, is worth more than "great riches."

(5.) He destroys his *usefulness*, so far as this depends upon business, reputation, money, intellectual and moral energy.

(6.) He greatly *injures his family*, by depriving them of the benefit of a good example, and by setting before them the most virulent contagion of a bad example, inducing imitation: also by depriving his children of the benefits of a good scholastic and moral and religious education, which drunkenness unfits him to bestow; by subjecting his family to painful mortification in their feelings, to poverty in their condition, and not unfrequently to terror and danger from his personal violence and ferocity.

(7.) The drunkard not only (as medical men have shown) shortens and destroys the life of the *body*, but inflicts deadly wounds (as the Bible teaches us) upon the more valuable part of man, the soul. "Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor *drunkards*, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God." 1 Cor. vi.



9, 10. Thus is drunkenness prohibited by the most tremendous of all sanctions—exclusion from eternal life.

(8.) Drunkenness is a *social*, festive vice; and is apt, beyond any vice that can be mentioned, to draw in others by the example. Whole neighborhoods are often infected by the contagion of a single example. Hence the guilt of this crime, when considered with reference to the individual himself and his family, is augmented by its necessary and easily foreseen consequences of wide-spread mischief to others.

699. An important question may here be discussed, as to how far drunkenness is an excuse for crimes committed.

(1.) We will suppose the drunken person to be altogether deprived of moral agency, that is to say, of all reflection and foresight. In this condition, it is evident that he is no more capable of guilt than a madman; although, like him, he may be extremely mischievous. The only guilt with which he is chargeable was incurred at the time when he voluntarily brought himself into this situation. And as every man is responsible for the consequences which he foresaw, or might have foreseen, and for no other, this guilt will be in proportion to the probability of such consequences ensuing. From which principle results the following *rule*, viz.: that the guilt of any action in a drunken man bears the same proportion to the guilt of the like action in a sober man, that the probability of its being the consequence of drunkenness bears to absolute certainty.

By virtue of this rule, those vices which are the known effects of drunkenness, either in general, or upon particular constitutions, are, in all, or in men of such constitutions, nearly as criminal as if committed with all the faculties and senses about them.

(2.) If the privation be only partial, the guilt will be of a mixed nature. For so much of his self-government as the drunkard retains, he is as responsible then as at any other time. He is entitled to no abatement beyond the strict proportion, in which his moral faculties are impaired. The guilt of the crime, if a sober man had committed it, may be called the *whole* guilt. A person in the condition we describe, incurs part of this at the instant of perpetration; and by bringing himself into such a condition, he incurred that fraction of the remaining part

which the danger of this consequence was of an integral certainty. [Paley.]

700. Both reason and experience show that *total abstinence from all articles that can intoxicate*, is such a remedy and such a safeguard; and hence should be universally adopted for the good of society, and of each of its members.

701. The following narrative is from a recent little volume by the Rev. Thos. P. Hunt, and may serve as a representative of numberless similar cases that have occurred in our own, and in other countries; it may also serve to illustrate many of the positions assumed above.

“In the state of R——, a man was hung for murdering his wife. She had gone to the liquor-seller, and on her knees begged him not to let her husband have rum. But she was ordered out, and her request denied. In the evening, after her husband became somewhat excited, the liquor-seller began to taunt and tease him by calling him henpecked, and the like sneering epithets. After he had aroused the fiend in his heart, he told him that his wife had been there to stop his grog. ‘Has she?’ said he; ‘sell me a knife, and I will cut her throat.’ He bought the knife, and started for home, bent on vengeance. When he reached the door, as he afterward stated, his heart failed him. How could he injure his wife? She had known happy days before he married her, and amid all his neglect and cruelty had never complained, had never upbraided him. She was the mother of his children, and had ever toiled for their good and his, and always taught them to respect him, even when he knew he deserved not their love. How could he injure such a wife? His conscience would not let him do it. He fled from the house as though the angel with the flaming sword of justice were pursuing him. But he fled to the grog-shop. Another half-pint did the business. Now no reason restrained—no conscience rebuked him. He ran to his house, seized his wife by the hair, and, drawing back her head, cut her throat. She, clapping her hand on the gash, ran over to the liquor-seller’s, and exclaiming to him, ‘See what you have done!’ died on the stone steps at his door!

Her dying exclamation is adapted to awaken the conscience of the sellers of intoxicating drink, and to hold up

to them the guilt of their sordid and pernicious occupation."

This affecting narrative teaches us that he who abhors the crimes committed by deranged men, should never venture on the formation of a habit, which may deprive him of any restraint or power to resist and to escape the temptations of a wicked heart. The drunkard was more to blame for moderate drinking, for that which made him a drunkard, than for deeds which resulted from a state of insanity. Every moderate drinker is exposed to such a dreadful result.

The civil law justly holds a drunken man responsible for criminal acts.

#### IX. *Duties involved in the Sixth Precept.*

702. (1.) We ought to use all proper means of preserving our own life, for our own sakes, and for the good of those who are dependent upon us, and to whom we may be useful in temporal and religious matters.

(2.) We are bound also to endeavor to preserve the lives of others by warning them of dangers to morals, health, and life; by rescuing them from perilous circumstances, especially from such destructive vices as intemperance in eating or drinking, and debauchery; by ministering to the supply of their necessities; by doing what will contribute to render life desirable and comfortable to them.

(3.) As there is a life of far greater importance than that of the body, the precept may be understood to comprehend the duties which relate to the welfare or salvation of our own souls, and those of our fellow-men.

[Professor Dick's Lectures.]

#### X. *Consequences of a Universal Violation of the Sixth Precept.*

703. It is obvious on the slightest reflection, that were this precept to be universally violated, human society would soon cease to exist.

In accomplishing such a horrid result, every peaceful pursuit and employment would be abandoned; the voice of wailing, and the yells of fury and despair would be heard in every family, in every village, city, field, kingdom, and clime. The work of destruction would go on with dreadful rapidity, till the whole race of man were

extirpated from the earth, leaving this vast globe a scene of solitude and desolation ; an immense open sepulchre : the *natural result*, too, of the principle of *hatred*, were it left to its native energies ; and were it not controlled, in the course of providence, by Him who sets restraining bounds to the wrath of man.

704. By way of counteracting the tendencies of this evil principle, it is of the utmost consequence that youth be trained up in habits of kindness, tenderness, and compassion, both toward human beings, and toward the inferior animals ; that an abhorrence should be excited in their minds, of quarreling, fighting, and all mischievous tricks and actions ; that they be restrained from the indulgence of malicious and resentful passions ; that the principle of active beneficence be cultivated with the most sedulous care. For, in youth, the foundation has generally been laid of those malevolent dispositions which have led to robbery, assassination, and other deeds of violence, which have filled the earth with blood and carnage.

[Dick's Philosophy of Religion.]

675. What is the prominent design of this precept ?

676. Does God make any distinction between human life and the life of the lower animals ?

677. Why should this precept be considered as thus limited in its prohibition ? Why is it not to be understood as guarding the life of every animal ?

678. Has the divine law given us authority to kill animals in other cases, or for other and minor purposes ?

679. Does the sixth precept forbid capital punishment, or the taking away of life for crime ?

680. What is the moral influence of the penalty of death compared with other penalties ?

681. What is it that renders murder eminently worthy of such a penalty ?

682. How has God, in his providence, discouraged the crime of murder ?

683. By whom must the punishment of death be inflicted, that it may be lawful, and not involve the crime of murder ?

684. Does this precept forbid the taking away of life in self-defense ?

685. How far are wars, in the course of which there must be the loss of many lives, consistent with this precept ?

686. How may it be shown that defensive war cannot entirely be dispensed with ?

687. What are the prominent causes of aggressive and unjust wars ?

688. Since wars are eminently destructive of human life, without just reason, and proceed from causes like those mentioned, what duty have we to perform in relation to this matter ?

689. What consequences of war may be mentioned to show the reasonableness and value of the sixth precept, "Thou shalt not kill ?"

690. Illustrate the subject by the story of the Nithsdale boys ?

691. Does the sixth precept forbid suicide, or self-murder ?



692. Will disgust at life, or severe affliction, justify self-murder?

693. In what consists the criminality of suicide?

694. How does it appear that dueling is a violation of the sixth precept?

695. Having shown that dueling involves the crime of murder, how does its absurdity appear, either as a punishment of an offense, or as a reparation?

696. State some other prohibitions under the sixth precept?

697. Why is drunkenness treated under the sixth precept?

698. Upon what other circumstances does its criminality depend?

699. How far is drunkenness an excuse for the crimes which the drunken person commits?

700. What is the only effectual remedy for drunkenness, and the only infallible safeguard against becoming its victim, and thus being led to crime and ruin?

701. What fact will serve to illustrate several of the positions assumed above?

702. What duties are involved in the sixth precept?

703. What consequences would follow upon the universal violation of this precept?

704. How should the tendencies of this evil principle in human nature be counteracted?

#### SEVENTH COMMANDMENT.

*"Thou shalt not commit adultery."*

##### I. *Design and Extent of this Prohibition.*

As in the last precept, where murder is forbidden, it was observed that everything which tends to it, or proceeds from the same bad principle with it, is forbidden too; so in the seventh precept, where adultery, or illicit intercourse with a married person, is prohibited, it is equally plain that the prohibition must be extended to whatever else is criminal in the same kind of conduct, and the Scriptures fully confirm this principle of interpretation.

705. (1.) The *great design of this precept* seems to have been to promote the happiness of human society, by maintaining the sacredness of the relation constituted by marriage, and by guarding against its abuse or neglect: for the institution of *marriage*, duly honored according to the Scriptures, must be regarded as the greatest bulwark of human virtue and human happiness. For this purpose it was instituted by God at the very commencement of human society, Gen. ii. 24; Matt. xix. 3-6. It is by means of this wise and gracious ordinance that he has provided for the regulation of those strong instinctive passions upon which the propagation of the race depends, and nothing is clearer than that a general disregard of this institution would inevitably make havoc of the peace,

purity, and highest welfare of society. While therefore the *sanctity of the marriage relation* is the first object aimed to be secured by this precept, it points its prohibition at the same time against everything that is contrary to the spirit and ends of that institution, whether in thought, word, or deed. Matt. v. 28.

706. (2.) With regard to the *extent* of this prohibition, “as *marriage* is the sole and exclusive provision made by the Creator to meet the demands of that part of our nature which the Seventh Commandment contemplates, every species of sensual commerce between the sexes except that which comes under its sanction, is doubtless to be viewed as a violation of this precept, as *also everything that goes by legitimate tendency to produce it*. Hence—

“All the arts and blandishments resorted to by the seducer; all the amorous looks, motions, modes of dress and verbal insinuations which go to provoke the passions, and make way for criminal indulgence; all writing, reading, publishing, vending, or circulating obscene books; all exposing or lustfully contemplating indecent pictures or statues; all support of or connivance with the practices of prostitution, whether by drawing a revenue from houses of infamy, or winking at the abominations of their inmates, partake, more or less, of the guilt of violating the Seventh Commandment.” [Bush on Exodus.]

To these must be added, marriage with any person who is too nearly related either by blood or affinity, to be a lawful partner; also marriage with those who have not been properly divorced, according to the Scriptures; Matt. v. 32. More flagrant violations of this law are stated in Leviticus xx. 13; xviii. 22–25.

In a word, it forbids all impure actions, all impure words, all impure thoughts, as sinful in themselves, and as leading to sin. This is our Lord’s commentary upon the law: “Whoso looketh upon a woman, to lust after her, hath committed adultery with her already in his heart;” and he teaches, in the same connection, that even wanton thoughts must be expelled from the soul, however difficult the act of expulsion, on pain of everlasting death. This is what he intends by the right hand, and the right eye, that are severally to be cut off and plucked out.

II. *Marriage.*

707. Marriage is an *ordinance of God*, for important purposes connected with the comfort and moral improvement of the species. Our first parents were united as husband and wife by their Creator himself, and an example was given to be imitated by their descendants. As such it was considered by Adam, who, instructed, no doubt, by a divine revelation, said on that occasion, "Therefore shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall cleave unto his wife." It may be observed, that Christ quotes this declaration as proceeding from the Creator himself: in either view, it comes to us with the highest authority.

This institution (marriage) was honored on at least one occasion by the personal attendance of Christ, and furnished an opportunity for the first of that splendid series of miracles, by which he proved himself to be the Son of God, and the Savior of the world. A further sacredness is thrown about this relation by the apostle Paul, when he compares it to that which subsists between Christ himself and his church, and thence deduces the corresponding obligations of husband and wife. Eph. v. 22-32.

708. Marriage is the *union of one man to one woman*, as husband and wife. This appears from the record of its original institution: "cleave unto *his wife*," not *his wives*, nor *their wife*; (1 Cor. vii. 2), "Let every man have his own *wife*," not *wives*. Hence polygamy is unlawful.

*Marriage a Civil as well as Divine Institution.*

709. As the relation is of great importance, not only to the individuals, but to society at large, the civil laws have taken it under their cognizance, and prescribed the forms which are necessary to legalize the transaction. These differ in different countries. When the laws have settled the forms, the observance of them becomes indispensable; and as marriage, although a divine institution, is at the same time a civil transaction, a marriage, in contracting which they have been neglected, is not legal, and cannot be considered as valid.

710. In the United States (at least in the state of New-York), *a simple consent of the parties* is all that is required

to render marriage *valid*: but this consent must be declared before a magistrate, or simply before witnesses, or subsequently acknowledged; or it may be inferred from continual cohabitation and reputation as husband and wife. Regulations have been made by law, in some of the states for the due solemnization and proof of marriage; but where such provisions have not been made, the contract is, in this country, under the government of the English common law.

But marriage, to be valid in law, requires the consent of parties *capable of contracting*. No persons are capable of binding themselves in marriage, until they have arrived at the age of consent, which, by the common law of the land, is fixed at fourteen years in males, and twelve in females: but in the state of New-York, seventeen for males, and fourteen for females. Idiots and lunatics cannot legally contract marriage.

[Young's Science of Government.]

711. Whether it has grown out of some tradition of the divine appointment of marriage in the persons of our first parents, or merely from a design to impress the obligation of the marriage contract with a solemnity suited to its importance, the *marriage rite*, in almost all countries of the world, has been made a *religious ceremony*: and this seems to comport best with its divine origin, sacred character, and great influence upon the future happiness of the parties, and of society. The contract partakes of the solemnity of an oath; and should, therefore, be made in connection with prayer to Almighty God for his benediction, and for his aid in fulfilling its engagements. The parties entering upon marriage, under such circumstances, would be more likely to feel ever afterward the obligation to be faithful, than when the service is performed merely by a justice of the peace, without religious ceremonies and offerings.

712. *Marriage is not a temporary contract*, like that between master and servant, but the union of a man and woman for life. They cannot separate at their pleasure, or at the expiration of a definite period. They are bound to adhere to each other during the term of their natural lives, and neither of them is at liberty to enter into a similar engagement, without an offense against the law both of God and man. See Rom. vii. 2, 3.



713. In consequence of a certain crime, however, this relation may legally terminate during the lifetime of the parties. The act of adultery, whether committed by the husband or wife, is a just and scriptural ground of divorce, or separation. Matt. v. 32; Luke xvi. 18; Mark x. 4-12; Matt. xix. 3-12. This act furnishes, according to the law of God—the Scriptures—the only just ground of divorce, or of full release from matrimonial obligations. It is a direct violation of the marriage vow, giving the aggrieved party a right to demand the dissolution of an engagement which the other has broken by retracting the pledge solemnly given at the commencement.

It is to be observed, however, that adultery does not *ipso facto*, by the act itself, dissolve the conjugal relation: it only invests the sufferer with the right to demand the dissolution of it from competent authority. If the wife, or the husband, does not choose to exercise the right, things legally remain as they were.

There are other grounds of separation recognized in civil law, and in practice, which will be presented under the head of Divorce.

### III. *Duties of the Married State.*

714. (1.) The ground of all duties, common to husband and wife, is *love*. A married couple without mutual regard is one of the most pitiable spectacles on earth. They cannot, and indeed, in ordinary circumstances, ought not to separate, and yet they remain united only to be a torment to each other. They serve *one important purpose*, however, in the history of mankind, and that is, to be a beacon to all who are yet disengaged, to warn them against the sin and folly of forming this union upon any other basis than that of a pure and mutual attachment; and to admonish all that are so united, to watch and maintain, with most assiduous vigilance, their mutual regard.

*If they would preserve love*, let them be sure to *study most accurately each other's tastes and distastes*, and most anxiously abstain from whatever, even in the minutest things, they know to be contrary to them.

Further, let them most *carefully avoid all curious and*

*frequently repeated distinctions of MINE and THINE*; for this has caused all the laws, and all the suits, and all the wars in the world. Let those who have but one person, have also but one interest. Instances may occur, in which there may, and must be, a separate investiture of property, and a sovereign and independent right of disposal in the woman: in this case, the most anxious care should be taken by the husband not to attempt to invade that right; and by the wife, neither ostentatiously to speak of it, nor rigidly to claim it, nor selfishly to exercise it.

(2.) *Mutual respect* is a duty of married life; for though the Scriptures enjoin on the wife especial reverence toward the husband, yet is respect due from the husband also.

But that each may be respected, each must possess a character, and so act, as to be really *respectable*, or worthy of respect. It is, and ought to be, a more dreadful thing for a married couple to lose their mutual respect, than to lose the respect of the world.

(3.) *Mutual attachment to each other's society* is a duty common to husband and wife.

They are united, in order to be companions. It is absurd for those who have no prospect of dwelling together, to enter this state; and those who are already in it should not be unnecessarily abroad. When from home, they cannot discharge the duties they owe to their household.

There are some husbands who seem fonder of any society than the company of their wives, as appears from the disposal of their leisure hours. How few of these are appropriated to the wife! *It is a sad reflection upon a man when he is fond of spending his evenings abroad.* It implies something bad, and it predicts something worse.

And then, to insure, as far as possible, the society of her husband, at his own fireside, let the wife be "a keeper at home," and do all in her power to render that fireside as attractive as good temper, neatness, and cheerful, affectionate conversation, can make it.

But *the pleasures of home must not be allowed to interfere with the calls and claims of public duty.* Wives must not ask, and husbands must not give, that time which is demanded for the cause of God and man.

(4.) *Mutual forbearance* is another duty. This we owe to all, not excepting the stranger or an enemy; and most certainly it must not be denied to our nearest and dearest earthly friend. Wherever sin or imperfection exists, there is room for the forbearance of love. There is no perfection on earth.

(5.) *Mutual assistance*, is the duty of husbands and wives. The wife should be willing to help the husband by her counsel in matters of business; while he should be willing to share with her the burden of domestic anxieties and fatigues.

They should be helpful to each other also in the concerns of personal religion. The highest end of the conjugal state is lost if it be not rendered helpful to our piety, and yet this end is too generally neglected, even by professors of religion.

This mutual help should extend to the maintenance of all the habits of domestic order, discipline, and piety. They must also be helpful to each other, in works of humanity and religious benevolence.

(6.) *Mutual sympathy* is required, not only in reference to their sicknesses, but to all their afflictions, whether personal or relative: all their sorrows should be common.

715. There are *special duties* which the husband owes to the wife, and again those which the wife owes to the husband, for the understanding of which "James's Guide to Domestic Happiness" may be consulted. We shall furnish from that admirable work an illustration of two or three duties which are especially important to be exhibited in the wife. The first of these is—

(1.) *Meekness*, which the apostle Peter enjoins upon every wife to cultivate. He speaks of the *ornament* of a meek and quiet spirit. No one stands in greater need of this disposition than the female head of a family; either the petulance and waywardness of children, or the neglect and misconduct of servants, or the sharp words of a husband, are almost sure, if she be easily provoked, to keep her in a state of painful irritation all the day long.

(2.) *The strength of woman lies not in resisting*, but in yielding; *her power is in her gentleness*: there is more of real defense, and more of that aggressive operation too, which disarms a foe, in one mild look, or one soft accent, than in hours of flashing glances, and of angry tones.

(3.) The *ornament of a meek and quiet spirit*, is enjoined by an apostle in contrast with *outward adorning* of the person, which he forbids—which teaches us that less attention should be paid to the decoration of the person; more to that of the mind. 1 Tim. ii. 9, 10; 1 Pet. iii. 3, 4.

716. *The evils of an improper attention to dress*, are the following:—

(1.) Much precious time is wasted in the study, and arrangements, and decision of this matter.

(2.) The attention is taken off from the improvement of the mind and the heart, to the decoration of the person.

(3.) The mind is filled with pride and vanity, and love of display, and the true dignity of the soul is degraded.

(4.) Money is wasted which is wanted for relieving the misery, and improving the condition of mankind.

“We sacrifice to dress, till household joys  
And comforts cease. Dress drains our cellar dry,  
And keeps our larder lean; puts out our fires;  
And introduces hunger, frost, and woe,  
Where peace and hospitality might reign.”

717. **ECONOMY** and **ORDER** in the management of her personal and domestic expenditure, is the obvious duty of a wife.

A showy, luxurious, and expensive taste is almost universally cherished in this age, where there are no means at the same time to support it.

718. *A wife should be most attentive to all that concerns the welfare and comfort of the family.*

For this purpose she must be “a keeper at home;” otherwise she cannot discharge the duties that devolve upon her. Whoever has leisure for gossiping, *she* has none. A mother’s place is in the midst of her family; a mother’s duties, are to take care of *them*. Even a *taste for literature* must be kept within due bounds, and not be allowed to interfere with her household duties. Much less must a *taste for company* be allowed to draw a wife too much out of the circle of her cares and duties, leaving the family at home to themselves, or to the care of servants.

Even attention to the *public* duties of *religion* must be regulated by a due regard to domestic claims. Yet many go to an opposite extreme, and make these claims an excuse for neglecting almost entirely the public duties of religion.



IV. *Benefits of the Marriage Institution.*

719. That God regards the marriage institution as highly beneficial, appears, from its early institution by him; from his guarding the invasion of it by an express precept in the Decalogue; from the severity of Jewish laws requiring the punishment of its violation; and from the threatenings of eternal vengeance for the same crime.

720. There are several *benefits* which it is adapted to bestow:—

(1.) The private comfort of individuals; especially of the female sex. Though all persons are not concerned in this reason, yet it is a reason for abstaining from any conduct which tends in its general consequence to obstruct marriage.

“Licentious men,” says Dr. Dwight, “both of ancient and modern times, have carried on a course of open and incessant hostility against this institution, as they have indeed against all the real interests of mankind. In the progress of this warfare they have arraigned the wisdom, and denied the benefits of it; charged upon it evils which it does not produce, and enhanced those which are incident to the marriage state.”

Having admitted the fact that there are many unhappy marriages, from an imprudent selection of partners; from entering into the married state without real love and esteem for the other party, for the sake of property perhaps; and from conduct inconsistent with the duties of the married state, he proceeds to say,—“I have lived in very many families; and these, often in plain, as well as polished life. With very many more, extensively diversified in character and circumstances, I have been intimately acquainted. By the evidence arising from these facts, I am convinced that the great body of married persons are rendered more happy by this union; and are as happy, as their character and their circumstances could permit us to expect.”

(2.) The preservation and comfort of children, their better education, and the making of due provision for their settlement in life.

(3.) The peace of human society, in cutting off a principal source of contention—existing where this institution is not observed.

(4.) The better government of society, by distributing the community into separate families, and appointing over each the authority of a master of a family, which has more actual influence than all civil authority put together.

(5.) The same end, in the additional security which the state receives for the good behavior of its citizens, from the solicitude parents feel for the welfare of their children, and from their being confined to permanent habitations.

(6.) The encouragement of industry and economy.

(7.) The promotion of religion in the world.

#### V. *Subjects collateral to Marriage.*

721. Of these we shall notice only Polygamy and Divorce—referring the student to Paley or Wayland for a discussion of other kindred topics.

##### (a.) *Polygamy.*

722. Not only the Scripture account of the creation of mankind is a proof, to as many as believe in Scripture, that the union of one man with one woman was the original design and will of Heaven; but *the remarkable equality of males and females* born into the world, is an evidence of it to all men.

Yet we know that polygamy was introduced at an early period; that it was practiced by the patriarchs and other pious men; and that it was recognized by the law of Moses, and subjected to regulation. If it was not properly approved, it was tolerated; and we must conclude, that at that period there was not such moral evil in it, if it was at all sinful, as was inconsistent with a state of salvation. Yet it ought to be considered that all the instances of polygamy mentioned in Scripture history were *attended with great calamities* to the children and parents, a fact that seems to prove that polygamy is opposed by God in his providence.

723. There are other reasons for considering polygamy unlawful. It is attended usually with the following bad effects to the parties and to the public: (1.) It is inconsistent with a due degree of mutual affection in the parties, and a due care in the education of their children. (2.) It introduces contests and jealousies among the wives of the same husband; keeps a multitude of females in

most unnatural bondage, frequently under guardians fitted for the office by unnatural cruelty, and tempts a multitude of males, thus left unprovided for, to unnatural lusts.

To compensate for these great evils, polygamy does not offer a single advantage.

Though polygamy was tolerated in the earlier ages among the Jews, it seems not to have been practiced among them in the time of Christ; for in the New Testament we meet with no trace or mention of its being tolerated. For which reason, and because it was likewise forbidden among the Greeks and Romans, we cannot expect to find any express law upon the subject in the Christian code. Yet there is an implied condemnation of it in several passages; as in Matt. xix. 9, for, if "who-soever putteth away his wife and *marrieth* another, committeth adultery," he who *marrieth* another *without* putting away the first, is no less guilty of adultery; because the adultery does not consist in the repudiation of the first wife (for however unjust or cruel that may be, it is not adultery), but in entering into a second marriage during the legal existence and obligation of the first.

The several passages in St. Paul's writings, which speak of marriage, always suppose it to signify the union of one man with one woman. Rom. vii. 2, 3; 1 Cor. vii. 2. The inference therefore is, that polygamy is condemned by Christ and his apostles. In some countries it is now punished with death; in others, as in this, with imprisonment.

#### (b.) *Divorce.*

724. Divorce is the dissolution of the marriage contract.

725. There can be no other just cause for this than incontinence, if the authority of Christ be regarded as supreme. Matt. xix. 3-6, 9. "Then came some of the Pharisees to him, and tempting him, asked, Can a man, upon every pretense, divorce his wife? He answered, Have ye not read, that at the beginning, when the Creator made man, he formed a male and a female; and said, for this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and adhere to his wife; and they two shall be one flesh. Wherefore, they are no longer two, but one flesh. What then God hath conjoined, let not man separate. Where-

fore I say unto you, whosoever divorceth his wife, except for whoredom, and marieth another, committeth adultery." This is Dr. Campbell's translation, and is thought very accurately to convey the meaning of the passage.

According to the highest legislative authority then, for such must Christ's be regarded, no divorce is lawful, except for the cause specified; and though human governments have unwisely and irreligiously taken the responsibility to grant divorces on other and much slighter grounds also, there is a tribunal before which all those persons will be tried for the crime of adultery, who, having obtained divorce on these slighter grounds, have formed subsequently another matrimonial connection. According to Christ's plain declaration, such marriages are a palpable violation of the Seventh Commandment.

726. From the language of Christ just quoted, it appears that the marriage contract is to be regarded not as a civil contract merely, but as a contract with religious sanctions; not as a merely human, but also as a divine institute; the terms and conditions of which, therefore, can be settled by God alone.

It is a matter upon which God himself legislated at the origin of the human family, and therefore for all future nations and governments; and his decree is, that no man, and of course no body of men, shall put asunder, or divorce, the parties united in marriage, except on such grounds as he might permit or ordain.

727. It must indeed be admitted, that God did permit divorce to the Jewish nation on other grounds than incontinence; but it was only a temporary expedient, growing out of a peculiar state of things, and not designed to be perpetual; it was on *account of the hardness of their hearts*. In the time of Moses, Jewish men were in the habit of putting away their wives on the slightest pretexts. It was not judged expedient to forbid this in a peremptory manner, in the Mosaic laws, but it was judged sufficient at that time to embarrass the proceeding by so many legal forms and delays as might exert an influence nearly equivalent to a prohibition and prevention.

But Christ, the precepts of whose religion were calculated for universal use and observance—for the world, as well as for the Jews—revokes this permission with regard to divorces, and promulges a law more consistent



with the original institute of marriage, a law which was thenceforward to confine divorces to the single cause of adultery in the wife. The rule was new : it surprised and offended the disciples ; yet Christ added nothing to relax or explain it.

728. Inferior causes may justify the *separation* of husband and wife, although they will not authorize such a dissolution of the marriage contract, as would leave either party at liberty to marry again.

If the care of children does not require that they should live together, and it is become, in the serious judgment of both, necessary for their mutual happiness that they should separate, let them separate by consent. Nevertheless, this necessity can hardly exist, without guilt and misconduct on one side or on both. Moreover, cruelty, ill-usage, extreme violence, or moroseness of temper, or other great and continued provocations, make it lawful for the party aggrieved to withdraw from the society of the offender without his or her consent. St. Paul distinguishes between a wife's merely separating herself from the family of her husband, and her marrying again : " Let not the wife depart from her husband ; but, and if she do depart, let her remain unmarried."

Sometimes divorce is given, by civil courts, *a mensa et thoro*, from bed and board, when legal provision is made for the separate maintenance of the injured wife. Sentences of the ecclesiastical courts, in England, which release the parties *a vinculo matrimonii*, on the ground of impuberty, bodily incapacity, consanguinity within the prohibited degrees, prior marriage, are not dissolutions of the marriage contract, but judicial declarations that there never was any legal marriage in such cases.

There will be no need of, nor desire for divorces, if husbands and wives would perform the duties which have been already described as belonging to the married condition.

729. The perpetuity of the marriage contract tends to preserve peace and concord between married persons, by perpetuating their common interest, and by inducing a necessity of mutual compliance. Thus each will strive to make the best of the bargain they have made, and will seek their own happiness by promoting that of each other.

Again, new objects of desire would continually be

sought, if men could, at will, be released from their existing engagements : and there is no other security against the invitations of novelty, than the known impossibility of obtaining the object.

730. Beside adultery, human laws add, as prominent grounds for divorce, obstinate desertion, outrageous cruelty, attempts upon life, incurable madness, and personal imbecility.

731. Were divorces generally permitted on the ground of unsuitableness of temper, or occasional jars, society would soon be shaken to its center. Every real or supposed insult or provocation would be followed out till it terminated in a separation of the parties ; families would thus be torn into shreds, the education of the young would be neglected, parental authority disregarded, and a door opened for the prevalence of unbounded licentiousness. Soon after the commencement of the revolution in France, a law, permitting divorces, was passed by the National Assembly ; and, in less than three months from its date, nearly as many divorces as marriages were registered in the city of Paris. In the whole kingdom, within the space of eighteen months, upward of twenty thousand divorces were effected ; and the nation sunk into a state of moral degradation, from the effects of which it never has recovered.

This is one of the many practical proofs presented before us, of the danger of infringing on any of the moral arrangements which the Creator has established ; and shows the impolicy of extending, in our own country, the act of divorce to any other cases than the single one, specified in the law of our Savior.

#### VI. *Counsels to aid in Keeping the Seventh Commandment.*

732. (1.) We should *cultivate an habitual sense of the divine presence* ; which enabled the illustrious Joseph to preserve his innocence, when he was exposed to very powerful solicitations : “ How can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God ! ”

(2.) *We should guard against the entrance of evil thoughts* into our minds, and immediately expel them, if they shall have entered, and we should labor to suppress the risings of unhallowed appetite, chiefly by turning our attention to other objects. The man who sports

with temptation, and quietly permits or encourages its first advances, is in danger of ultimately yielding to it.

(3.) We *should guard against all incentives to those indulgences which are forbidden by this precept*—all those spectacles, reading, and conversation, which are calculated to excite sensuality.

We should avoid idleness, which, leaving the mind vacant, exposes it to the inroads of unhallowed imaginations and sentiments.

We should avoid intemperance in eating, and the use of intoxicating drinks, than which nothing is more likely to give appetite the mastery over reason and conscience.

#### VII. *Tendency of a Universal Violation of the Seventh Commandment.*

733. Were this law to be universally violated, a scene of unbounded licentiousness would ensue, which would degrade the human character, which would destroy almost all the existing relations of society, and unhinge the whole fabric of the moral world.

The endearing relations of father and mother, of brothers and sisters, and all the other ramifications of kindred, which now produce so many interesting and delightful associations, would fail to be recognized among men: for in such a state of society, the natural relations of mankind would either be disregarded, or blended in undistinguishable confusion.

The foundation of all regular government would be undermined; for it is chiefly in those habits of submission and obedience which are acquired under the domestic roof, that the foundations are laid of that subordination which is necessary to secure the peace and order of mankind. Society would constantly be thrown into a state of disorder, and anarchy, and bloodshed.

The earth would cease to be cultivated, and would soon be covered with briers and thorns, or changed into barren wastes.

To complete the picture, it would be necessary, in imagination, to multiply a thousand or ten thousand fold the receptacles of impurity that now infect and demoralize both city and country in every land; and to estimate the evil of all the impiety, profanity, thefts, robberies, mur-

ders, treachery, perjury, drunkenness, and infamous pollution and disease and misery of every kind, by which such receptacles are distinguished.

734. *There is a certain levity of speech, in relation to this subject*, prevailing among many who wish to be considered as respectable characters, which proceeds from a contracted view of the consequences of human actions. They conceive that no great harm can be done to society by a few insulated actions of the kind alluded to, especially if they be concealed from general observation; and that the Creator will be disposed to make every allowance for human frailty.

But let such remember that if it were right to violate this or any other law of the Creator in one instance, it would be right in a thousand, in a million, and in eight or ten hundred millions of instances; and then all the revolting scenes now alluded to, and more, would inevitably take place. And, therefore, every man who, from levity and thoughtlessness, or from a disregard to the laws of Heaven, persists in such unhallowed gratifications, indulges in a practice which, were it universally to prevail, would sap the foundations of all moral order, exterminate the most endearing relations of society, open the flood-gates of all iniquity, and, at length, empty the world of its inhabitants.

[Dr. Dick.]

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- 705. What is the great design of this precept?
  - 706. What is the extent of this prohibition?
  - 707. What proof is there of the sacred character of this institution?
  - 708. What is the limit of this institution?
  - 709. Is marriage a civil as well as a divine institution?
  - 710. What are the requisites of a valid marriage?
  - 711. What remarks are made upon the marriage ceremony?
  - 712. Is marriage a temporary contract?
  - 713. Is there no act which may legally terminate this relation during the lifetime of the parties?
  - 714. What are the duties common to husband and wife?
  - 715. What special duty of the wife is first mentioned?
  - 716. What are the evils of an improper attention to dress?
  - 717. What special duty of the wife is next exhibited?
  - 718. The last special duty of the wife mentioned?
  - 719. How does it appear that God regards it as highly beneficial?
  - 720. What benefits do experience and observation prove it to be adapted to bestow?
  - 721. What are the subjects collateral to marriage?
  - 722. How does it appear that polygamy, or the having more wives than one at the same time, is contrary to the law of God?
  - 723. What other reasons are there for considering polygamy unlawful?
  - 724. What is meant by divorce?



725. On what accounts may the marriage contract be dissolved ?

726. From the language of Christ, just quoted, how is the marriage contract to be regarded ?

727. Did not God permit divorce, to the Jewish nation, on other grounds beside incontinence ?

728. May inferior causes justify the separation of husband and wife, or their living apart from each other ?

729. What cogent reasons are there, even on natural principles, for lawgivers making the marriage contract indissoluble during the joint lives of the parties ?

730. What other prominent grounds for divorce, beside adultery, are assigned by human laws ?

731. What effects are to be apprehended from facility in obtaining divorces ?

732. How may we be aided in keeping this commandment ?

733. Tendency of a universal violation of this commandment ?

734. What levity of speech, in relation to this subject, ought to be censured, and laid aside ?

#### EIGHTH COMMANDMENT.

*"Thou shalt not steal."*

735. I. *THE design of this commandment is to guard property against fraud and open violence.* It places a sacred inclosure around it, into which no person must enter without the consent of the proprietor.

The commandment implies that individuals have an exclusive right to the possession and disposal of certain things ; that others have, of course, no right to interfere with the possession of them ; and it also implies that there is a tendency in human nature to such interference, which requires to be suppressed by law, divine as well as human.

When the Creator had arranged our globe in the form in which we now behold it, he furnished it with everything requisite for the support and accommodation of living beings, and bestowed the whole of its riches and decorations as a free grant to the sons of men. The earth has, in every age, brought forth abundance to supply the wants of all the living beings it contains ; and there is still ample room on its surface for the accommodation and support of thousands of millions of the human race, in addition to those which now exist. But mankind have never yet agreed about the division of this ample gift of the Creator ; for every one is disposed to think that his share in it is too small, and is continually attempting to make inroads upon the allotment of his neighbors. To this disposition is to be ascribed more

than one half of all the evils which have afflicted the world in every age since the fall of man.

To counteract such a propensity in mankind, and to regulate their conduct in relation to property, is the great object of this command, "Thou shalt not steal."

## II. *Right of Property.*

736. It is unnecessary to engage in an inquiry how property is acquired. The subject has been discussed by philosophers, and different theories have been proposed and defended.

(1.) It has been said to originate in the *right of occupancy*; or, that he who first took possession of a part of the common field of nature, became its rightful proprietor. This implies more than first discovering, or visiting: it supposes the actual occupancy and care of the land.

(2.) It has been founded on the right of labor: that is, it has been supposed that a man, by cultivating a part of the soil, was entitled to claim, not only the produce, but the soil, as his own.

(3.) It has been referred to the will of God, who, having created all things for the use of man, gave liberty to every individual to appropriate to himself what was necessary to the supply of his wants.

(4.) Without troubling ourselves with the discussion of these theories, it is sufficient to remark, that, in a state of society, property is ascertained and guarded by the law of the land. As it points out the various ways in which it may be acquired, and secures it to the rightful possessor, so it determines in all controversies which arise between two or more individuals, who is the rightful owner of a field, a house, money, &c.

## III. *Nature of the Act prohibited in the Eighth Precept.*

737. The act here prohibited, *is the appropriation to ourselves*, by our own act, encouragement, or connivance, *of that which we know belongs to another.*

A man would not be chargeable with stealing, who should seize another man's property, believing it to be his own, and should endeavor to establish his claim to it at law: although his right was not valid, his intentions

would not be dishonest. But he is a transgressor of this commandment, who takes what he knows belongs to another man; and although he shall have attained the sanction of law by such acts as the unprincipled too often employ, he is a thief or robber in the estimation of God.

Upon the obvious principle that this commandment is virtually invaded when we possess ourselves, or remain in possession, of that which rightfully belongs to another, a distribution may be made of offenses, into the following or similar classes.

#### IV. *Various Classes of Theft Prohibited.*

##### (1.) *Domestic Theft—*

738. Where *children* secrete, for their own use, the property of their parents. This kind of theft generally is that which prepares the way for more open theft, and should be effectually suppressed at the earliest period. "Whoso robbeth his father or his mother, and saith, It is no transgression; the same is the companion of a destroyer." Prov. xxviii. 24.

Domestic theft is also practiced by *servants*, when they take something belonging to their masters or employers which they would not feel at liberty to take if these were observing them. The value of the thing does not affect the nature of the act. It is as truly *stealing*, to take without leave one cent as one hundred. "Exhort servants to be obedient to their own masters; *not purloining*, but showing all good fidelity." Tit. ii. 9, 10.

##### (2.) *Common Theft.*

739. This has been sufficiently explained. It is distinguished from *robbery* only in the manner of committing it. The former is secret; the latter is more bold and open. Robbery is accompanied with violence, threatened or actually employed, to compel a surrender or to overcome resistance.

##### (3.) *Sacrilege—*

740. Theft of the property belonging to a church, or of anything devoted to the service of God.

This crime is comparatively rare, partly because the

temptations to it are neither frequent nor great; partly because men are restrained by a sense of religion; and partly because it would cover the guilty with indelible infamy. "Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me—in tithes and offerings. Ye are cursed with a curse." These tithes were required to be paid for the support of the ministers, and sacrifices of the temple service. This would seem to teach that, under the New Testament economy, the withholding of due support to ministers of the Gospel is also robbery of God, when the people are able to give such support.

#### (4.) *Peculation*—

741. *Theft of the public money*: the concealing and devoting to private use any public property. This crime is often committed, and by persons who pass in the world for honorable men, and who look down with ineffable contempt upon the obscure culprit who practices his depredations upon a confined scale. It is as unjust secretly to take the property of the community as of an individual; in the former case many are injured, in the latter, one only. "Render, therefore, to all their dues; custom to whom custom." This prohibits all evading of the duties and taxes imposed by government; also of post-office claims.

The man of office, who, by embezzlement or unfair exactions and charges, fills his purse out of the public treasury, stands on a lower level, in respect to moral guilt, than the contemptible wretch who goes from house to house, pilfering whatever he can find.

"For services rendered to public bodies almost all men demand a greater reward than they would dare to claim from individuals. For commodities sold to them, they demand a higher price; *seeming to think that there is no wrong in demanding more of public bodies for the same service, or the same commodity, than of individuals, because public bodies are more able to pay.* In settling accounts with them, they claim greater allowances; and in every transaction plainly intend to get more than custom and equity have permitted in the private business of mankind. The single article of *perquisites* is a gulf of voracity which has no bottom."

[Dr. Dwight.]



(5.) *Thefts of Stewardship or Agency.*

742. These are committed by agents, whether stewards, executors of wills, or others to whom business is intrusted, when they misuse, waste, or keep back the property whose management has been intrusted to them. "It is required of stewards that a man be found faithful." 1 Cor. iv. 2.

743. The following cases are cited by Dr. Ely, in his "Synopsis":—

A certain executor retained the property of some orphan children in his own hands, to the detriment of their estate. He did not, when able, refund the sums he had received, with lawful interest. The heirs were satisfied, because they supposed they had received their due, when in fact they were cheated: *that executor was a thief*, an oppressor of the fatherless.

A certain civil officer took, by virtue of attachment, the property of his neighbor, but, to favor himself or a friend, did not dispose of it to the best of his ability: *he was a thief*.

A certain judge promoted his own interest to the disadvantage of another, when the forms of law gave him a veil to cover the deception; and was found guilty, not by a jury of his countrymen, but by his own conscience, of willfully injuring another in his estate.

A consignee received the property of another in distressed circumstances, and because the owner of the goods could not investigate the matter, cheated him out of a part, by informing him they sold for less than they actually did. *This man was a thief*.

Another agent did not make accurate returns, estimated goods at a higher price than he actually paid out of his employer's money: took pay for his labor, and, in addition, a secret profit upon the articles purchased. *This is stealing*.

Children sometimes commence this wicked practice, by defrauding their parents or masters, when sent to purchase some article, to which they affix a higher price than they gave, and keep their gains of dishonesty for private expenditure.

The Eighth Commandment is broken too, when men waste the property of others which is committed to their care, or permit it to be wasted by their children, or other

persons ; when they suffer it to go to decay, and do not use the means of improving it which are in their power, and which they were bound by their engagements to employ. In this way many are guilty of a breach of this commandment who do not suspect their own honesty, and would consider themselves insulted if it were called in question by others.

(6.) *Theft of Concealment.*

744. This crime belongs to those who find and use lost property without endeavoring to ascertain the lawful owner. "Thou shalt not see thy brother's ox or his sheep go astray, and hide thyself from them ; thou shalt in any case bring them again to thy brother. In like manner shalt thou do with his raiment, and with all lost things of thy brother's which thou hast found."

Children should never keep anything secretly which belongs to a companion. Many who have concealed some plaything, found at school or elsewhere, and used it as if it were their own, have afterward become more daring thieves. From the concealing of a penknife, or pencil, or any other small article, they have gone to the robbing of a fruit-tree ; from pilfering out of gardens the tempting melons, to the plundering of a cornfield, a cellar, or storehouse ; and, from house-breaking, to murder and the scaffold.

To conceal theft in others, or to share the fruit of their iniquity, belongs to the same species. "When thou sawest a thief, thou consentedst with him ; but whoso is partner with a thief, hateth his own soul."

[Ely's Synopsis.]

(7.) *Theft of Trade.*

745. This is practiced if the *seller* puts off anything for a better article than it really is, by false assertions or deceitful acts ; if he takes advantage of the buyer's ignorance, or particular necessities, or good opinion of him, to insist on a larger price for it than the current value ; or if he gives less in quantity than he professes, or is understood to give ; or if he adulterates his goods, and, consequently, sells them at a price which they would not have brought if their state had been known.

To the practice of concealing the faults of what we

want to put off, may be referred the practice of *passing bad money*, the vulgar excuse being offered that we have taken the money for good, and must therefore get rid of it. This excuse is much the same as if one who had been robbed upon the highway should allege that he had a right to reimburse himself out of the pocket of the first traveler he met; the justice of which reasoning the traveler possibly may not comprehend.

On the other hand, this theft is practiced by the *buyer* when he depreciates the article he would purchase, contrary to his knowledge of its value; when he takes advantage of his own wealth and the poverty or present distresses of the seller, to beat down the price of his merchandise beyond reason; or when he buys up the whole of a necessary commodity, to make immoderate gain of it; or when he refuses or neglects to pay for what he has bought, or delays his payment beyond the time within which, by agreement, or the known course of traffic, they ought to be made.

The law of God thus notices these offenses:—"It is naught, it is naught, saith the buyer; but when he is gone his way, then he boasteth." Prov. xx. 14. "If thou sell aught unto thy neighbor, or buyest aught of thy neighbor's hand, ye shall not oppress one another." "Let no man go beyond and defraud his brother in any matter; because the Lord is the avenger of all such." "A false balance is an abomination to the Lord; but a just weight is his delight." Prov. xi. 1.

Again, "*any one who purchases without an intention of paying, or without seeing probable means of satisfying just demands upon him, is really no better than a person who should come in the night and drive your oxen from their stalls.*" Yet, in the maxim of some, "if you sink, sink in deep water;" or, in other words, if you must break, and cannot pay all your debts, make as many more, and cheat as many persons as possible—be as much a knave as possible! These principles of iniquity have become very fashionable, in some well dressed thieves that strut at large, and tell you, by their daily expenses, that they closed their business to retire from the bustle of the world and live like gentlemen of pleasure. Such are thieves and robbers; for, knowingly to involve an innocent man, under the pretense of trade, is carrying away, contrary

to his knowledge and consent, his hard-earned interest to support our extravagance.” [Ely’s Synopsis.]

(8.) *Thefts of Borrowing.*

746. The commandment is violated by borrowing on fraudulent securities or false representations of our circumstances, or without intention or proper care afterward to repay, preferring the gratification of our own covetousness, our vanity, our voluptuousness, our indolence, before the satisfying of our just debts. Of the same sort is the practice of denying a debt, or refusing to make restoration, or taking advantage of some legal quirk to evade payment, or removing to a place beyond the reach of creditors, or taking unjust advantage of insolvent laws, and refusing afterward, when able, to pay debts from which such laws may have released us.

The frauds connected with the *borrowing of property* ought here to be noticed.

The commandment is virtually transgressed by those who, through negligence, allow an article loaned to them to be injured, and do not repair the injury; also, when an article of inferior value is returned in place of that which was borrowed.

There is moral wrong in unreasonably detaining in our possession whatever has been loaned to us for a moderate or specified time; also in employing that which is lent for purposes and in ways not contemplated by the lender. This wrong is often committed by children absent from home, at school, using the money intrusted to them for necessary expenses in other modes of expenditure inconsistent with the parents’ command or known wishes and expectations.

(9.) *Theft of Usury.*

747. It is considered a breach of this commandment to demand exorbitant interest for lending to ignorant or thoughtless persons, or to extravagant ones for carrying on their extravagance; or to necessitous ones, whose necessities it must continually increase, and make their ruin, after a while, more certain, more difficult to retrieve, and more hurtful to all with whom they are concerned.

The Jewish law forbade all interest for the use of money among the Jews, because it was not consistent



with their peculiar circumstances and training as a people to allow it; but they were not forbidden to lend to the people of other nations upon interest.

(10.) *Theft relating to Contracts.*

748. This relates to driving bargains that we know are too hard, or insisting rigidly on the performance of them after they appear to be so; making no abatements, when bad times or unexpected losses, or other alterations of circumstances call for them; not inquiring into the grounds of complaints when there is a likelihood of their being just; keeping persons to the very word and letter of an agreement, contrary to the equitable intention of it; or, on the other hand, alleging some flaw or defect in the form, to get loose from an agreement which ought to have been strictly observed. Though some of these things may not be illegal, yet they do not comport with the spirit of this commandment. Human laws cannot provide for all cases, and sometimes the vilest iniquity may be committed under their authority, and by their means.

To the illustrations given under this head we may add another: it is when hired servants, or workmen of any sort, are ill used in their wages, whether by giving them too little, or, which is full as bad, deferring payment too long. The word of God forbids the last in strong terms: "Thou shalt not defraud thy neighbor, neither rob him; the wages of him that is hired shall not abide with thee (meaning, if demanded or wanted) all night until the morning. At his day shalt thou give him his hire, neither shall the sun go down upon it." But this matter we have considered under the Fifth Commandment.

(11.) *Thefts of Mischief.*

749. There are those whose habits of injustice, envy, or some other base passion, prompt them "to mar and deface handsome buildings and fences, to root up or cut down trees and shrubs planted for shade and for ornament. One would think that, in the view of such minds, beauty and elegance were public nuisances, and that to have contributed to adorn one's country with the delightful productions of nature and art is a trespass upon the common good.

"Another class of frauds, possessing the same nature,

is seen in most places, at least in this country, *in the abuses of public property*. Public buildings are almost everywhere injured and defaced: the windows are broken; the doors, wainscoting, pillars, and other appurtenances formed of wood, are shamefully carved and hacked; the courts, balustrades, and other vulnerable articles are mangled and destroyed—in a word, injuries of this nature are endless, and all of them are scandalous *frauds*, useless to the perpetrators, wounding to every man of integrity and taste, discouragements to public improvement, and sources of public deformity and disgrace.”

[Dr. Dwight.]

(12.) *Thefts of Litigation.*

750. It is a breach of the spirit of this commandment, when one person puts another to the charge and hazard of law, unjustly or needlessly; or in ever so necessary a lawsuit, occasions unnecessary expenses, and contrives unfair delays: in short, when anything is done by either party, by the counsel that plead or advise in the cause, or by the judge who determines it, contrary to real justice and equity.

(13.) *Theft of Withholding.*

751. When persons, *by any means whatever*, withhold from another his right; either keeping him ignorant of it, or forcing him to unreasonable cost or trouble to obtain it; this, in its proportion, is the same kind of injury with stealing from him. This is often practiced upon the poor; but not unfrequently also upon the rich. Though the person who is wronged be ever so wealthy, still his wealth is his own, and no one can have more right to take the least part of it from him without his consent, than to rob the meanest wretch in the world. The same remarks apply to the government, or the public, when defrauded. The crime is the same, whoever be the sufferer.

(14.) *Theft of Participation.*

752. Whatever things it is unlawful to do, it is also unlawful to advise, encourage, help, or protect others in doing: hence the buying, receiving, or concealing stolen goods, known or suspected to be such, is becoming a partner in the stealth. The being in any way, a patron,

assistant, or tool of injustice, is no less evidently wrong, than being the immediate and principal agent in it.

(15.) *Thefts of Forgery and Counterfeiting.*

753. The first of these consists in making or altering any written instrument with the intention to defraud or wrong any person. The other consists in making false and base coin; in preparing false bank-notes or fraudulently altering true notes. The civil law makes it criminal not only to make or pass such coins or notes, but to hold in possession any engraved plate or notes unsigned, which are intended to be used for such purposes.

(16.) *Theft of Gambling.*

754. This is a direct method by which we injure the property of others. It cherishes, and calls into exercise, the desire to acquire what others possess, and thus leads to a violation of the law of God.

There are but two possible methods by which we can acquire property from others honestly: either by free gift, or by rendering an equivalent for what we receive. In gambling it is received in neither of these ways. The gambler may lay his account with *losing* a certain sum, but not with freely giving away; and the only equivalent which he obtains is the chance, as it is called, of depriving another, contrary to his intention, of a part of his property. Nor would he hazard his own at all, but that it is necessary for him to do so, in order to get possession of that which is not his. The money lost is lost contrary to the wish, the design, and consequently to the proper consent of the persons losing; while the winner holds it by no better tenure, according to the laws of morality, than the thief or the robber.

The gambler, therefore, is guilty of a direct violation of the law of God, in plundering the property of others, and reducing them to poverty and wretchedness; and proves himself by such conduct to be void of piety, benevolence, or humanity. He is a source of evil by his example, as well as by his actions; a corrupter of youth, stealing from them not their property only, but what is infinitely more valuable, their virtue and their happiness; and doing all in his power to prevent their retreat from the road that inevitably leads to present and future ruin.

If it be said by the advocate of gambling, that every man has an exclusive right to the use of his property, it is to be remarked, by way of qualification, that every man is also a steward, and is accountable to the Proprietor of all for the way in which he employs it. As it is manifestly the design of God that the gifts which he bestows should be expended in useful and beneficent purposes—in diffusing happiness—we are not at liberty to appropriate them to other ends, or foolishly to waste them: much less, dispose of them for unworthy purposes—for encouraging vice. [Dewar.]

These are some of the various modes in which the commandment relating to property is violated. Others might be specified. We shall add but one more.

(17.) *Theft of Persons and Personal Rights.*

755. This being the most serious and criminal kind of theft, has been reserved for consideration last. It brings to view one of the most vexed and difficult subjects in the whole range of moral discussion; one which in late years has awakened more interest, and occasioned more acrimony and danger, than almost any other; one, however, that cannot with propriety be omitted in a work of this kind; one upon which a right opinion should be formed, and right action taken by every American citizen. No subject has the author approached with more diffidence and fear than this; lest amid the great discordance of views entertained even by great and good men, he should fail to present such a view of the matter as the divine law, and the Scriptures generally, sanction and require. He claims no superior wisdom or judgment, but is obliged, under a sense of his personal responsibility, to present what he considers the sober truth upon the great question of AMERICAN SLAVERY; and, as in other parts of the work, so in this, he will freely introduce the thoughts and language of other and abler minds than his own. No attempt will be made, for there is not space, to present the subject in all its bearings; but to offer only some general views, such as are demanded in a treatise on Moral Philosophy. Those who desire a more full discussion can obtain their object by reading the works of Albert Barnes, Drs. Fuller and Wayland, and Dr. Channing.



V. *Slavery.*

756. The first important question that claims our attention, is, whether slavery, in its *essential characters*, possesses such attributes as entitle it to be ranked among the violations of the Eighth Commandment. To settle this question is the object of the present article.

The character of complete slavery is, that *it deprives the slave unjustly of all his rights*: and what property can be more dear than these? In confirmation of this charge against slavery, Dr. Channing advances and demonstrates the following positions:—

Slavery violates, not one, but all rights; and violates them, not incidentally, but necessarily, systematically, from its very nature. In starting with the assumption that the slave is property, it sweeps away every defense of human rights and lays them in the dust.

(1.) Slavery strips man of the fundamental right to inquire into, consult, and seek his own happiness. His powers belong to another, and for another they must be used.

(2.) The slave is forbidden to acquire property. Being himself owned, his earnings are the property of another. He can possess nothing but by favor.

(3.) The slave is stripped of his right to his wife and children. They belong to another, and may be torn from him, one and all, at any moment, at his master's pleasure.

(4.) He is stripped of the right to the culture of his rational powers; nor is he allowed to toil that his children may enjoy a better education than himself.

(5.) He is deprived of the right of self-defense. No injury from a white man is he suffered to repel, nor can he seek redress from the laws of his country.

(6.) He is stripped of the right to be exempted from all harm except for wrong doing.

(7.) He suffers the wrong of robbery. Whatever he may be denied by man, he holds from nature the most valuable property, and that from which all other is derived—his strength. To the great mass, in all countries, their strength or labor is their whole fortune. To seize on this would be to rob them of their all. In truth, *no robbery is so great as that to which the slave is habitually subjected*. To take by force a man's whole estate, the

fruit of years of toil, would, by universal consent, be denounced as a great wrong; but what is this compared with seizing the man himself, and appropriating to our use the limbs, faculties, strength, and labor, by which all property is won and held fast? The right of property in outward things is as nothing, compared with our right to ourselves. Were the slaveholder stripped of his fortune, he would count the violence slight, compared with what he would suffer, were his *person* seized and devoted as a chattel to another's use.

757. That the above are not groundless assertions, but a true account of the *domestic institution* at the South, could easily be shown by quoting from published laws there enacted, and either enforced, or liable to be enforced upon any slave. The Louisiana code declares: "A slave is in the power of the master to whom he belongs. The master may sell him, dispose of his person, his industry, his labor. He can do nothing, possess nothing, nor acquire anything but which must belong to his master." The laws of South Carolina say: "Slaves shall be deemed, taken, reported, and adjudged, to be chattels personal in the hands of their masters, and possessions to all intents and purposes whatsoever."

758. That the above view of slavery is correct, will further be substantiated by quoting the testimony of the Rev. R. J. Breckenridge, D.D., who was born and educated in a slave state, and still resides in a slave state, and must therefore be well acquainted with the morals and usages of the South. He says:—

"What is slavery as it exists among us? We reply, it is that condition, enforced by the laws of one half of the states of this confederacy, in which one portion of the community, called masters, is allowed such power over another, called slaves, as—

"1st. To deprive them of the entire earnings of their own labor, except only so much as is necessary to continue labor itself, by continuing healthful existence, thus committing CLEAR ROBBERY:

"2d. To reduce them to the necessity of universal concubinage by denying to them the civil rights of marriage, thus breaking up the dearest relations of life, and encouraging universal prostitution:

"3d. To deprive them of the means and opportunities

of moral and intellectual culture, in many states *making it a high penal offense to teach them to read*; thus perpetuating whatever of evil there is, that proceeds from ignorance :

“ 4th. To set up between parents and children an authority higher than the impulses of nature, and the laws of God ; which breaks up the authority of the father over his own offspring, and at pleasure separates the mother at a returnless distance from her child ; thus abrogating the clearest laws of nature, thus outraging all decency and justice, and degrading and oppressing thousands upon thousands of beings created like themselves in the image of the Most High God.

“ This is slavery as it is daily exhibited in every slave state. This is that ‘ dreadful but unavoidable necessity,’ for which you may hear so many mouths uttering excuses, in all parts of the land.” [African Repository.]

759. Further, slavery deprives men of the dignity of human beings, and degrades them to a level with mere beasts of burden. They are converted, by slave laws, from persons to *things*, and treated as no longer possessing the recognized attributes of human nature. They are, in the eye of the law, no longer acknowledged as men. Their pleasures and pains, their wishes and desires, their thoughts and feelings, are of no value whatever. Even their crimes are not acknowledged as wrongs, any more than those of a brute, lest it may be supposed that being regarded as capable of doing a wrong, they ought to be regarded as capable of suffering a wrong.

They of course are thus *legally* deprived of their nature as moral beings, having no law but the will of the master, like the brute property of the master.

760. It is pleaded, in favor of slavery, that the negro is a being inferior to the white man in his faculties. He is asserted to approach in his nature to the inferior animals ; and hence it is inferred that he may be possessed as a thing, like those animals.

761. This defense of slavery may easily be overthrown. The same faculties of mind have appeared in the negro as in the white, so far as the condition of negro nations has afforded opportunities for their development. The negroes do not appear to be duller, ruder, or coarser, in mind or habits, than many savage white nations, or than

nations, now highly cultured, were in their early condition.

The negro has a moral nature, discriminates between right and wrong in actions. He has the same affections and springs of action as ourselves. He can buy and sell, and promise and perform. He has, equally with other races of men, moral sentiments: can admire and love what he considers good, and condemn and hate what he considers bad. He has the sentiment of rights and wrongs also. In short, there is no phrase which can be used, describing the moral and rational nature of man, which may not be used of the negro, as of the white. The assertion that there is, between the white and the black race, any difference on which the one can found a right to enslave the other, is utterly false.

Various races of men differ somewhat in their external form, but are furnished substantially with the same physical organization. They differ also greatly in color, but why a white color, rather than a black, should be an attribute of man as such, it would be difficult to show.

The *use of language* is a plain and simple criterion of the difference between man and the brutes; and we have shown that the negro possesses other distinguishing attributes of the human nature.

Again, the laws which prohibit slaves to be taught to read or write suppose the capacity of negroes for intellectual culture; and are an implicit confession that it is necessary to degrade their minds in order to keep their bodies in slavery.

The claim of the negro to be regarded as a *man* being thus briefly established, the charge will hold good against slavery *as a system*, that it is a violation of the Eighth Commandment, being a system of robbery and oppression of the most decided and willful character.

[Whewell's Elements.]

762. It comes in conflict also with other expressions of the will of God. "Behold, the hire of the laborers who have reaped down your fields, which is of you kept back by fraud, crieth; and the cries of them which have reaped are entered into the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth." James v. 4. "Rob not the poor because he is poor." Prov. xxii. 22. "Woe unto him that buildeth his house by unrighteousness, and his chambers by wrong; *that*



*useth his neighbor's service without wages, and giveth him not for his work.*" Jer. xxii. 13. "The laborer is worthy of his reward." 1 Tim. v. 18. These passages condemn the system of slavery, in which a fair equivalent is confessedly not rendered for the labor performed, so that the master may live in indolence. If a fair equivalent were rendered, the system would become so utterly unprofitable, that it must soon be abandoned.

Further, the Bible, both in the Old and New Testament condemns *oppression*, as well as the withholding of just wages. "What mean ye that ye beat my people to pieces and grind the faces of the poor? saith the Lord of hosts." Is. iii. 15. See also Ps. xii. 5; James ii. 13; v. 4.

Mr. Barnes has remarked, that if it were the design to originate a system of laws for *the very purpose* of oppression, scarcely any new element could be introduced into the laws of the Southern states; and that if all that properly comes under the name of oppression were removed from those laws, slavery, as a system, would soon come to an end.

763. It is a question of some interest, whether any moral wrong attaches to those who hold slaves by inheritance and not by purchase. To this the reply may be given in the forcible language of Mr. Dymond:—

"He who had no right to steal the African can have none to sell him. From him who is known to have no right to sell, another can have no right to buy, or to possess. Sale, or gift, or legacy imparts no right to me, because the seller, or giver, or bequeather had none himself. The sufferer has just as valid claim to liberty at my hands as at the hands of the ruffian who first dragged him from his home. Every hour of every day the present owner is guilty of injustice. Nor is the case altered with respect to those who are born on a man's estate. The parents were never the landholder's property, and therefore the child is not. Nay, if the parents had been, rightfully, slaves, it would not justify me in making slaves of their children. No man has a right to make a child a slave, but the child himself (nor even has he). What should we say of a law which enacted, that of every criminal who was sentenced to labor for life, all the children should be sentenced to labor also?

"That any human being who has not forfeited his lib-

erty by his own crimes, has a right to be free, and that whosoever forcibly withholds liberty from an innocent man, robs him of his right, and violates the moral law, are truths which no man would dispute or doubt, if custom had not obscured our conceptions, or if wickedness did not prompt us to close our eyes."

764. In palliation of the wrong of *holding men as property*, it has been said, that a man has property in his wife, in his children, in his domestic animals, in his fields and forests; and where it is said that one man is the property of another, it can only mean that the one has the right to use the other *as a man*, but not as a brute, or a thing. When this idea of property comes to be analyzed, it is found to be nothing more than *a claim of service either for life, or for a term of years*.

But the error of this assumption has been fully exposed in the recent work of Mr. Barnes. He has shown that slavery is not a mere condition of apprenticeship; that the service which a slave is bound to render to his master is not that which the apprentice is bound to render to his employer; that while the relations resemble each other in certain circumstances, they differ in the following of the highest moment, namely, that the relation of an apprentice is designed to be temporary; is formed for the good of the apprentice himself; contemplates his future usefulness and happiness, and provides what is considered a full equivalent for the labor he is to perform; implies moreover no claim of property in the *apprentice*; and involves no right to transfer him to another.

He has further shown that slavery is not to be confounded with the condition of a *minor*.

He has shown also that there are important differences between the American slave, and the serfs of Russia and the "villains" of the feudal system; above all, that the kind of property which a slaveholder has in his slave is entirely different from that which a man has in his wife or child: that the relation of parent and child is a *natural* relation; that of master and slave is not: that the relation of husband and wife is *voluntary*; that of master and slave is not: that wives and children are treated in all respects *as human beings*; slaves, *according to the system authorized by law*, are not: that in the relations of husband and wife there is no right of property in any such sense as that in

which the word property is commonly used : there is, for example, *no right of sale* ; no right *to sunder the relation* for the mere sake of gain, at least as these relations are generally understood in Christian lands.

765. It is a matter of primary importance to determine in what light slavery is presented in the sacred writings : and here Mr. Barnes, upon a critical examination of them, seems to have conclusively shown that slavery is an institution which God has never originated by positive enactment ; that his legislation has tended from the beginning to mitigate its evils ; that his providential dealings have been adverse to it ; that he has asserted great principles in his word which cannot be carried out without destroying the system ; that he has enjoined on man, in the various relations of life, certain duties, of which slavery prevents the performance ; that slavery engenders certain bad passions, which are wholly contrary to religion ; and that *it is the tendency and the design of the Christian religion, when fairly applied, to abolish the system.*

766. Yet, if God does not approve, but has designed gradually to abolish the relation of master and slave, how can it be accounted for that he does not condemn it in express terms, as he condemns idolatry and oppression ? and that, instead of this, he prescribes the duties belonging to the so-called criminal relation of master and slave, just as he prescribes the duties of parent and child ? To these questions Mr. Barnes offers the following reply :—

“ To prescribe the duties of certain persons while sustaining a certain relation to each other, cannot be construed as an approbation of the relation itself. It might not be desirable for him who gave directions about the right mode of acting *in* a certain relation, to attempt to disturb it at that time, or it might be impossible at once to remove certain evils connected with it, and yet there might be important duties which religion would enjoin while that relation continued. Even on the supposition that the apostles regarded the system as a great evil, and desired the immediate abolition of slavery, *as long as* the relation continued, they would require that the Christian spirit be exhibited.”

The apostles enjoined on the *oppressed* certain duties ; but this does not prove that the relation of oppressor is a harmless one : they prescribed the duties also of those



who were *persecuted*, but this must not be construed as an approbation of the relation of persecutor. Nor do we meet in Scripture with any express condemnation of these relations; yet they are confessedly relations that ought not to exist, and cannot exist without crime. The Scriptures condemn the things done by those holding these relations, just as they condemn the things done by the slaveholder, as such.

767. Moreover, it is not true that the apostles "legislated" for slavery as they did for the relation of husband and wife, and parent and child; or that they ever represented those relations as parallel, or as equally desirable and acceptable to God. (1.) They uniformly represent servitude as a *hard* condition; 1 Cor. vii. 21; 1 Pet. ii. 18-23; Eph. vi. 9; Col. iv. 1. (2.) They enjoin on slaves submission to their condition as a hard one, and one in which they were constantly liable to suffer wrong; 1 Pet. ii. 18, 19. (3.) The principal virtue which the apostles enjoined on slaves to cultivate, is that of *patience under wrong*. There is no other relation in life in which the leading virtue enjoined to be cultivated, is *patience under the infliction of wrong*. (4.) They represented it as desirable to escape from servitude if it could be done; or as more desirable to be free than to be in that condition; 1 Cor. vii. 21. But where is anything like this said respecting the condition of a wife or child?

[Barnes on Slavery.]

768. It is said that if the apostles were opposed to slavery at heart, and regarded it as sinful, their course of instruction in relation to it was inconsistent with moral honesty. But Dr. Wayland, in reply to this insinuation, justly observes, that "the course which the Gospel takes on this subject, seems to have been the only one that could have been taken in order to effect the universal abolition of slavery. The Gospel was designed not for one race, or for one time, but for all races, and for all times. It looked, not at the abolition of this form of evil for that age alone, but for its universal abolition. Hence the important object of its author was to gain it a lodgment in every part of the known world; so that, by its universal diffusion among all classes of society, it might quietly and peacefully modify and subdue the passions of men; and thus, without violence, work a revolution in the whole mass of



mankind. In this manner alone could its object, a universal moral revolution, have been accomplished. For if it had forbidden the *evil*, instead of subverting the *principle*; if it had proclaimed the unlawfulness of slavery, and taught slaves to *resist* the oppression of their masters, it would instantly have arrayed the two parties in deadly hostility throughout the civilized world; its announcement would have been the signal of servile war; and the very name of the Christian religion would have been forgotten amid the agitations of universal bloodshed. The fact, under these circumstances, that the Gospel does not forbid slavery, affords no reason to suppose that it does not mean to prohibit it; much less does it afford ground for belief that Jesus Christ *intended to authorize it*.

The slave's duty of obedience to his master, it ought to be remembered, is never urged, like the duty of obedience to parents, *because it is right*, but because the cultivation of meekness and forbearance under injury will be *well pleasing to God*. The manner in which the duty of slaves is inculcated, therefore, affords no ground for the assertion that the Gospel authorizes one man to hold another in bondage, any more than the command to honor the king, when that king was Nero, authorized the tyranny of the emperor; or than the command to turn the other cheek, when one is smitten, justifies the infliction of violence by an injurious man. Obedience to such commands is our duty, not because our fellow-man has a right to claim this course of conduct of us, nor because he has a right to inflict injury upon us, but because such conduct in us will be well pleasing to God.

[Moral Science, pp. 214, 215.]

769. (1.) The Scriptures are explicit and decisive in condemning slaveholding; not by that *name* indeed, but they condemn the *thing* under the names of injustice, oppression, unmercifulness, theft, robbery, evil-doing, &c. *They could not condemn it under the title of servitude, for many modifications of servitude are both just and necessary.*

(2.) The laws of God in relation to this subject, are sufficiently plain and intelligible for the direction of all candid, diligent, and earnest inquirers. The divine law, in respect to slavery, is left very much as it is in respect to many other important subjects, so as to require critical and continual study in order fully to understand it. For

want of this candid and thorough study, or through the prejudice of education, and the blinding influence of self-love, many good men have fallen into error in respect to the criminality of slavery; as good men have fallen into error on other subjects that are taught with more or less clearness in the sacred scriptures.

[Consult Sawyer on Servitude.]

770. Benevolent slaveholders at the South are environed with peculiar difficulties in abolishing slavery, even were they disposed to do it. The law has thrown those difficulties in their way; so great, that we think they may be justified in remaining, *for a time*, slaveholders, on the following conditions:—

(1.) They must, *in their own minds at least*, renounce the system as anti-Christian and oppressive.

(2.) They must regard and treat their slaves not as *things*, but as *men*; according to the principles laid down under the Fifth Commandment.

(3.) They must exert themselves, in all judicious ways, to secure, as soon as practicable, the elevation of the slave to the condition of a freeman, and make all the provision in their power to prevent the liability of their slaves to sale for debt, and to secure their freedom after their own decease. They must labor to correct the state of public opinion which now sustains the laws of slavery, and thus prepare the way for a more just, enlightened, and Christian legislation, under which, at the earliest practicable period, slavery may be abolished.

(4.) They may *nominally* hold the slave as property, but simply *for the good of the slave*, and *with a view to public order and safety*.

(5.) They must discontinue and abhor the practice of selling slaves, and of sundering those who are connected by the natural relations of life.

(6.) In short, they must discontinue the practices *peculiar* to the system of slavery, and be *slaveholders only in name*, and from benevolent motives—and only with a view to a temporary continuance of the relation.

771. It seems not to be fair or right to denounce every man as wicked, unjust, and unchristian, who occupies the relation of a slaveholder; for we cannot doubt that there are hundreds, whose sentiments and practice, under the system of slavery, *virtually abolish the relation*, and who

are not, therefore, proper objects of censure. Allowances also should be made in the case of some others for the prejudices of education, and for their ignorance of the true method of interpreting the voice of Scripture in relation to slavery. The real difficulties also which are attendant upon immediate and general emancipation ought to be fairly considered.

But no apology can be made for those who advocate slavery, as the laws define it; who regulate their practice by their *legal* rights as holders of slaves; "who hold their fellow-creatures in bondage from selfish, base motives; who hold the slave for gain, whether justly or unjustly they neither ask nor care; who hold him, not for his own good, or the safety of the state, but with precisely the same views with which they hold a laboring horse, that is, for the profit which they can wring from him; who will not hear a word of his wrongs, for, wronged or not, they will not let him go."

*Duty of Masters to their Slaves.*

772. The *duty of masters*, in a state of society where slavery exists, has been explained, for the most part, in the answer to the question, how the relation of slaveholder may be temporarily sustained without an infraction of the Eighth Commandment. [Art. 770.]

It has been supposed, in that answer, that immediate abolition is not generally practicable, in consequence of the degraded condition of the slave; and yet we know it is the duty of every man to cease doing wrong, without delay. As the degraded condition of the slave is due to the slaveholder, or the system under which he has acted, the slaveholder is under obligation immediately to set about removing the impediments to immediate and universal abolition in the community to which he belongs. These impediments consist chiefly in the degraded condition of the slave, and so far as ignorance is concerned, the laws are an impediment, and should be changed.

The slave must begin to be treated as a man, instructed as a man, rewarded for his labor as a man, assisted in mental and moral improvement, relieved from the various wrongs to which the system of slavery exposes him, and gradually prepared for the duties and privileges of a freeman.

In this course of the preparation of a slave for freedom (as Dr. Wayland excellently remarks), "it may be the duty of the master to hold the slave; not, however, *on the ground of right over him*, but of *obligation to him*, and of obligation *to him* for the *purpose of accomplishing a particular and specified good*. And, of course, he who holds him for any other purpose, holds him wrongfully, and is guilty of the sin of slavery. In the mean while, he is innocent *in just so far as* he, in the fear of God, holds the slave, not for the good of the master, but for the good of the slave, and with the entire and honest intention of accomplishing the object as soon as he can, and of liberating the slave as soon as the object is accomplished. He thus admits the slave to equality of right. He does unto another, as he would that another should do unto him; and thus acting, though he may *in form* hold a fellow-creature in bondage, he is *in fact* innocent of the crime of violation of liberty. This opinion, however, proceeds upon the supposition that immediate abolition would be the greatest possible injury to the slaves themselves, not being competent of self-government."

*Duty of Slaves to their Masters.*

773. In the words again of Dr. Wayland: "They are bound to obedience, fidelity, submission, and respect to their masters, not only to the good and kind, but also to the unkind and froward; not, however, on the ground of *duty to man*, but on the ground of *duty to God*. This obligation extends to everything but matters of conscience. When a master commands a slave to do wrong, the slave ought not to obey. The Bible does not, as I suppose, authorize resistance to injury; but it commands us to refuse obedience in such a case, and suffer the consequences, looking to God alone, to whom vengeance belongeth.

"Acting upon these principles, the slave may attain to the highest grade of virtue, and may exhibit a sublimity and purity of moral character, which, in the condition of the master, is absolutely unattainable.

774. "By instilling the right disposition into the bosoms of the master and the slave, it teaches the one the duty of reciprocity, and the other the duty of submission; and thus, without tumult, without disorder, without revenge,



but by the real moral improvement of both parties, restores both to the relation toward each other intended by their Creator."

VI. *Duties implied in the Eighth Commandment.*

775. (1.) *With regard to those who have violated this commandment in any form*, their duty is to abstain from future violations, to cease to do this evil, and to learn to do well.

But this is not all: it is their duty to *make restitution*, as far as they have ability and opportunity, of what they have at any time unjustly taken or detained; for, that being, in right, not our own, but another's, the keeping of it is continuing and carrying on injustice. To think of raising wealth by fraud, and then growing honest, is the silliest scheme in the world; for, till we have returned, or offered to return, as far as we can, all that we have gotten by our fraud, we are not honest.

It is, further, their duty to *guard against temptation to a repetition of the crime*, and against all the causes which might lead to it; and hence—

(2.) The commandment implies the duty of *industry*, without which the generality of persons cannot maintain themselves honestly. Accordingly, Paul enjoins, "Let him that stole steal no more; but rather let him labor, working with his hands the thing which is good." If a man has not resources of his own, he must endeavor to provide them by lawful industry, and thus cut off one strong temptation to theft.

The calling in which we engage must be a lawful one, because the gain which is acquired by an illicit occupation is the fruit of a violation either of this or some other commandment. It must be carried on by lawful means, by fair and honest industry, to the exclusion of falsehood and fraud, and all encroachments upon the rights and privileges of others. It should be managed with attention, and prudence, and perseverance, because it is only by the use of these means that we can reasonably calculate upon success; but moderation should be observed, not only lest our strength be impaired, and life abridged, but that we may not contract an undue attachment to wealth, and, by fostering the principle of avarice, create a new temptation to dishonesty.

(3.) *Frugality* must be joined with diligent industry, for unwise expensiveness will dissipate whatever the utmost diligence can acquire; but if idleness be added to extravagance, a speedier ruin is induced; if, further, intemperance and debauchery go along with them, the case is an extreme one. Every one, therefore, who desires to approve himself honest should be *careful to live within the bounds of his income*, so as to have something in readiness against unforeseen losses or disappointments; but they who have, or expect to have families, should endeavor to live much more within those bounds; and whoever spends upon himself, or throws away upon any other person or thing more than he can prudently afford (whatever false names of praise, as elegance, generosity, good-nature, may be given to this indiscretion), will be led, before he is aware, to distress himself, perhaps many more, and be, too, probably driven at last to repair, as well as he can, by wickedness, the inroads upon his property which he has made by folly.

(4.) This precept requires that we do not *omit to relieve the poor* according to our ability, for this is a kind of robbery. Whatever we enjoy of worldly abundance is given us in trust, that we should take our own share with moderation, and distribute the remainder with liberality. Whoever either penuriously or thoughtlessly neglects his proper share of beneficence to the poor, is unjust to his Maker, and to his fellow-creatures; for His command is, "Withhold not good from them to whom it is due, when it is in the power of thine hand to do it."

[Secker.]

## VII. *Benefits to Society from the universal Observance of the Eighth Commandment.*

776. Were this law universally observed, a new scene would burst upon the world, altogether different from what has been displayed in the transactions of mankind. The iron rod of oppression would be broken, the horrid scenes of slavery would disappear, and destroying armies would no longer ravage the habitations of men. The crowds of sharpers, cheats, and jockeys, that now stalk through the world, with unblushing fronts, to entrap the unwary, would forever disappear from the world. Impartial justice would reign triumphant over every

department of society; and all the harassing lawsuits and prosecutions which now distress so many thousands of families would be swept away. Locks, and bars, and bolts would no longer be required for securing our substance from the pilferer and the robber; the iron gratings of a bridewell or a jail would never again remind us of the dishonesty and depravity of man. Every one's mind would be at perfect ease in regard to his property, whether he were at home or abroad, being firmly persuaded that every trust would be faithfully discharged, and every commercial concern honorably and fairly transacted. What a host of cares, anxieties, suspicions, vexations, and perplexities would thus be chased away, and what a world of delightful associations would thus be created!

[Professor Dick's Lectures; Secker's Lectures; Dick's Philosophy of Religion.]

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- 735. What is the general scope and design of this commandment?
  - 736. How is property acquired?
  - 737. What is implied in the act of stealing?
  - 738. Explain domestic theft?
  - 739. Also common theft?
  - 740. Explain sacrilege?
  - 741. Also peculation?
  - 742. Explain thefts of stewardship, or agency?
  - 743. What are the cases cited?
  - 744. Explain theft of concealment?
  - 745. What theft is practiced in trade?
  - 746. Thefts of borrowing?
  - 747. Thefts of usury?
  - 748. Thefts relating to contracts?
  - 749. Thefts of mischief?
  - 750. Thefts of litigation?
  - 751. Theft of withholding?
  - 752. Theft of participation?
  - 753. Thefts of forging and counterfeiting?
  - 754. Theft of gambling?
  - 755. Theft of persons and personal rights?
  - 756. Does slavery, in its essential character, possess such attributes as entitle it to be regarded and stigmatized as a violation of the Eighth Commandment?
  - 757. Reference to Southern laws?
  - 758. Testimony of Dr. Breckenridge?
  - 759. Of what other things (the inalienable property of man, as man) does the institution of slavery, by its laws, virtually or explicitly defraud men, and thus violate the principle of the Eighth Commandment?
  - 760. What prominent defense has been set up for thus regarding and treating African slaves?
  - 761. How may this defense of slavery be overthrown?
  - 762. Does slavery, as a legalized system, come in conflict with any other expression of the will and law of God, of a similar character?
  - 763. Does any moral wrong attach to those who hold slaves by inheritance and not by purchase?

764. By what method is it attempted to palliate or deny the wrong we have shown to be involved in the idea or practice of holding men as property?

765. What is the true character of the Scripture argument on the subject of slavery?

766. If God does not approve, but has designed gradually to abolish the relation of master and slave, how can it be accounted for that he does not condemn it in express terms, as he condemns idolatry and oppression: and that, instead of this, he prescribes the duties belonging to the so-called criminal relation of master and slave, just as he prescribes the duties of parent and child?

767. In what terms do the sacred writers speak of the condition of slaves, and what particular class of duties do they most insist on, showing the calamity of such a condition?

768. It is said that if the apostles were opposed to slavery at heart, and regarded it as sinful, their course was inconsistent with moral honesty: what disposition can fairly be made of this allegation?

769. What further answer may be given to the question: "If slaveholding is wrong, why was it not condemned in express terms, in the Scriptures?"

770. Notwithstanding all that has been said in proof of the sinfulness of slavery, of its opposition to the spirit and precepts of the Gospel, are there no circumstances in which the relation of a slaveholder may continue for a time without the guilt of violating the Eighth Commandment?

771. Is it candid, or right, to denounce all slaveholding as sinful, anti-Christian, and justly liable to ecclesiastical censure?

772. What is the duty of masters in a state of society where slavery exists?

773. What is the duty of slaves to their masters?

774. How has Dr. Wayland shown the adaptation of the Christian religion to abolish slavery, with safety and benefit to master and slave?

775. What duties are implied in this commandment?

776. What benefits would society derive from a universal observance of this commandment?

#### NINTH COMMANDMENT.

*"Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor."*

##### I. *Nature and Extent of the Prohibition.*

###### (a.) *False Testimony and Conduct in Courts of Justice.*

777. (1.) THE crime here *expressly* forbidden is, *the giving of false testimony concerning a person when we are summoned as witnesses in his cause, by proper authority.* This is done when we affirm that to be true which we know to be false; when we declare as certain what is doubtful; when we intentionally give a higher coloring or a deeper shade to a transaction than is consistent with fact; when we deliberately conceal anything which would serve to establish the innocence or the guilt of our neighbor (for hiding the truth may as totally mislead those who are to judge as telling an untruth)—indeed, if, by any means whatever, we disguise the real state of the case, we evi-



dently transgress the intent of this commandment. God hath declared, "A false witness shall not be unpunished, and he that speaketh lies shall not escape."

The Ninth Commandment speaks only of giving false witness *against* our neighbor; but in effect it binds us equally not to bear false witness *for* him: because, in all trials of property, bearing witness for one party is bearing witness against the other; and, in all trials for crimes, false evidence to the advantage of the person accused is to the disadvantage and ruin of right and truth, of public safety and peace; by concealing and encouraging what ought to be detected and punished. The term *neighbor* we have shown to be synonymous with *fellow-man*.

In these and other ways witnesses may swerve from the truth; and as their evidence, in a judicial trial, is given upon oath, they further incur the guilt of *perjury*: "These are the things that ye shall do, speak ye every man the truth to his neighbor."

778. (2.) It being thus criminal to bear false witness, it must be *criminal also to draw persons into the commission of so great a sin*, by gifts, or promises, or threatenings, or any other method. And, in its degree, it must be criminal to *bring a false accusation* or false action against any one; or to make any sort of demand for which there is not reasonable ground.

779. (3.) However favorably persons are apt to think of the defendant's side, yet *to defend ourselves against justice, or even to deny it by unfair methods*, is criminal; for justice ought to take place, and the sooner the better. Still, both the professors of the law and others may unquestionably say and do for a doubtful or a bad cause whatever can be said *with truth*, or done *with equity*; for otherwise it might be thought still worse than it is, and treated worse than it deserves.

780. (4.) The commandment is violated if *judges* or *jurymen* are influenced in giving their sentence or verdict, by interest, relation, friendship, hatred, compassion, party, by anything but the nature of the case as it fairly appears to them. For, the designedly making a false determination, is completing all the mischief which bearing false witness only attempts; and, in a word, whoever, in any way, promotes what is wrong, or obstructs what is right, partakes in the same sin, be it either of the par-

ties, their witnesses, or agents ; be it the highest, or the lowest officer.

(b.) *Slander.*

781. (1.) *Persons may break this commandment*, not only in judicial proceedings, but *in common discourse* : by raising, spreading, or countenancing false reports against others, or such as they have no sufficient cause to think true ; by speaking, without foundation, to the disadvantage of their persons, understandings, accomplishments, temper, or conduct—whether charging them with faults and imperfections which do not belong to them, or taking from them good qualities and recommendations which do ; deciding upon their characters from a single bad action or two ; fixing ill names on things which are really virtuous or innocent in them ; imputing their laudable behavior to blamable or worthless motives ; making no allowance for the weakness of human nature, strength of temptation, want of instruction, vicious examples.

In all these ways persons may be injured, either by open, public assertions, or more dangerously, perhaps, by secret whispers, which they have no opportunity of contradicting.

The *scandal may be accompanied* with strong expressions of hope that it is not true, or of great sorrow for it, and warm declarations of good-will to the party whom it concerns—all which may serve only to give it a more unsuspected credit. Nay, it may be conveyed very effectually in dark hints, expressive gestures, or even affected silence ; and these, as they may be equally mischievous, are not less wicked for being more cowardly, and more artful methods of defamation.

782. (2.) Further yet : *speaking or intimating things to any person's disadvantage, though they be true*, is seldom innocent ; for it usually proceeds from bad principles—revenge, envy, malice, pride, censoriousness ; unfair zeal from some private or party interest ; or, at best, from a desire to appear to know more than others, or mere impertinent fondness for talking. Sometimes, indeed, bad characters and bad actions ought to be known ; but much oftener not, or not to all the world, or not by our means ; and we have need to be very careful from what inducements we act in such a case.

783. (3.) We may transgress this precept *when we do*

*not speak at all*; for, by remaining silent when something injurious is said of another, we tacitly give our assent, and, by concealing what we know to the contrary, by not bringing forward what would rebut the charge, we become guilty not in a much inferior degree to the first contriver of the calumny.

784. (4.) We are under obligation to be *cautious not only what harm, but what good we say of others*; for the speaking too highly of their characters or circumstances, or praising them in any respect beyond truth, is bearing false witness about them, which may sometimes turn against them, and may often mislead those to whom we speak too favorably of them, and produce bad consequences of many kinds.

## II. *Design and Importance of the Ninth Commandment.*

785. The *design* of this precept is, *to promote universal truthfulness* between man and man. Our organs of speech were given for the purpose of speaking truth. Herodotus tells us, in the first Book of his history, that from the age of five years to that of twenty, the ancient Persians instructed their children only in three things: viz., to manage a horse, to shoot dextrously with the bow, and *to speak the truth*; which shows of how much importance they thought it to fix this virtuous habit early on the minds of youth. [Buck's Works.]

786. That *veracity is of immense importance* to intelligent beings, is obvious; because—

(1.) *It is the bond of society, and the foundation of all that confidence and intercourse which subsist among rational beings.* By far the greater part of the knowledge we possess has been derived from the testimony of others.

On the supposition of the veracity of others, all the transactions of domestic, literary, and commercial life, and all the arrangements and operations of government are conducted.

(2.) *Frequent or habitual lying would put an end to all the pleasure, all the benefit, all the safety of conversation.* Nobody would know on what, or on whom to depend: for if one person may lie, why not another? and at this rate, no justice can be done, no wickedness be prevented or punished, no business go forward.

All these mischiefs will equally follow whether untruths

be told in a gross, barefaced manner, or disguised under equivocations, quibbles, and evasions. The sin therefore is as great in the one case as in the other.

(3.) *Truth is the foundation of our present religious comfort, and of our future prospects in another world.*

Our hopes of happiness beyond the grave depend upon the testimony of the inspired writers, and the credence we yield to their communications. And therefore the man who endeavors to undermine the authority of the sacred records, or to distort or misrepresent their meaning by sophistical reasonings, ought to be viewed as an enemy to his species, since he would deprive them of their most substantial enjoyments, and of their most cheering prospects.

(4.) In few words, without truth, there could be no security among men, no friendship, no mutual coöperation, no transactions of any kind: they would be filled with jealousy and distrust, and be reduced to a helpless individuality of existence, destitute of all comfort, and harassed with perpetual suspicion and alarm.

No disposition, no duty can be of greater importance than truth, to man in the various stages of his existence, as a sentient, intellectual, moral, and religious being; and no crime can be greater in magnitude, or more ruinous in its consequences, than its violation. Illustrations of these several points are furnished in Dick's *Philosophy of Religion*.

787. To guard human society against the disastrous effects of a want of veracity, the Creator has planted deeply in human nature two important principles—an instinctive propensity to speak truth, and an instinctive propensity to believe testimony.

The former alleged trait of human nature may seem to be denied in the declaration of Scripture, "The wicked are estranged from the womb, they go astray as soon as they be born, speaking lies." These words do indeed import that there is a proneness to duplicity and deceit in human nature, of which there are indications at a very early period; but it is called into action only under particular circumstances, and, in general, children are proverbial for speaking the truth. It comes spontaneously from our lips when no motive to utter falsehood is presented; and so strong is the natural connection between



our sentiments and our words, that it frequently escapes from us when it would be our interest to conceal it. Men usually speak truth, and lie only occasionally.

The disposition to give credit to testimony presupposes the former propensity; it assumes that truth is generally spoken; it is strongest prior to experience of deceit, and becomes suspicious and cautious in proportion as that experience is acquired.

But although there is a natural propensity to speak truth, when it is not counteracted by any improper influence, yet men, being in a degenerate state, do not feel so sacred a regard to it as is sufficient to secure them against temptation. There are frequent violations of it from various causes, against which this precept is directed.

788. Truth may be considered under two aspects: *logical* truth, which consists in the conformity of a proposition or assertion to the nature and state of things; and *moral* truth, which consists in the agreement of our words and actions with our thoughts. Logical truth belongs to the *thing* or fact asserted; moral truth, or what is termed *veracity*, has a reference to the *person* who utters it. The Ninth Commandment immediately regards the latter, but not to the exclusion of the former. If it is our duty not to deceive others, *it is our duty to take care that we be not ourselves deceived*; and consequently to make ourselves thoroughly acquainted with a subject before we venture to speak of it. But when a man speaks as he thinks, he speaks moral truth, and although he should be mistaken, he is not guilty of a lie.

Truth also denotes fidelity in the fulfillment of promises and contracts.

### III. *Falsehood.*

789. A lie is the utterance of what is not true, when the speaker professes to utter truth, or when he knows it is expected by the hearer; it is something said with an intention to deceive.

#### (1.) *Lies of Malignity.*

790. Mrs. Opie, whose work on lying is eminently worthy of perusal, and from which we shall freely quote, makes two classes of lies of this sort—those of first-rate, and those of second-rate malignity. Under the head of slander we have considered the first class. Under the

second class are ranked, the tempting persons, by dint of flattery, to do what they are incapable of doing well, from the mean, malicious wish of leading them to expose themselves, in order that their tempter may enjoy a hearty laugh at their expense: the complimenting either men or women on qualities which they do not possess, in hope of imposing on their credulity: praising a lady's dress or work to her face; and then, as soon as she is no longer present, not only abusing both her work and her dress, but laughing at her weakness, in believing the praise sincere.

(2.) *Jocose Lies*—

791. Lies told for the purpose of amusement and merriment. However common these are, and however lightly they are thought of, a strict moralist will condemn them also, because truth is too sacred to be trifled with.

(3.) *Benevolent Lies*—

792. Those which are intended to promote the benefit of others.

It has been pleaded, as an apology for these, that they do no harm, but, on the contrary, do good: a conscience duly informed, however, does not judge of the morality of an action by its consequences, but by the law; and, "to do evil that good may come," is a principle which the Scripture has proscribed.

Persons frequently employ *falsehoods to a sick man* who cannot recover, lest truth should discompose his mind. This is called kindness, although an earnest preparation for death may be at stake upon their speaking the truth. There is a peculiar inconsistency sometimes exhibited on such occasions: the persons who will not discompose a sick man for the sake of his interests in futurity, will discompose him without scruple if he has not made his will. Is a bequest of more consequence to a survivor, than a hope full of immortality to the dying man?

It is said that we may tell a *falsehood to a madman* for his own advantage, and this because it is beneficial. Those who have had great experience in the treatment of the insane, decide that it is not beneficial to employ falsehood in the management of them; and on this ground, if no other, falsehoods, in such cases, are not to be justified.

Lies of benevolence are often told in favor of un-

worthy servants, to aid them in securing a place; or, what is more common, when an opinion is asked concerning them, an essential part of the truth is withheld, with the intention to deceive, that is, to give a fairer impression of the servant than a full disclosure of truth would warrant. This species of deception is a lie of benevolence to the servant, but of malevolence to those who, by means of it, may be led to employ such servants.

(4.) *Pious Lies, or Frauds.*

793. *Pious* lies, or frauds (if such an epithet be at all allowable), are, those lies or frauds which are professedly designed to promote the cause of religion.

These began to be practiced at an early period in the Christian Church; and consist not only of lies told, but of miracles feigned, books forged, and sophistical reasoning deliberately employed, to advance the cause of religion. This is that doing of evil to produce good which Paul condemns in his letter to the Romans. No man, on any pretext, has a right to depart from moral rules, from the eternal laws of right and wrong. The very wish to do good by means of evil, seems to originate in a bad state of heart: and were the good produced ever so extensive, it would not palliate the sin of direct disobedience to God. Is it for creatures, short-sighted and dependent as we are, to venture on the violation of His laws, from the presumptuous hope of producing greater good by their violation than by their observance?

If *pious* lies (so called) are incapable of defense, most assuredly no other sort of lie admits of justification.

(5.) *Lies of Equivocation.*

794. This species of falsehood consists in the studied use of terms which bear two different senses, in one of which the speaker understands them, while he means them to be understood in the other by the person addressed.

(6.) *Lies of Vanity.*

795. Examples of these are the following:—

Suppose that, in order to give myself consequence, I were to assert that I was actually acquainted with certain great and distinguished personages, whom I had merely met in fashionable society.

If I assert that my motive for a particular action was virtuous, when I know that it was worldly and selfish, I am guilty of a direct lie. But I am equally guilty of falsehood, if, while I hear my actions or forbearances praised, and decidedly imputed to worthy motives, when I am conscious that they sprung from unworthy or unimportant ones, I listen with silent complacency, and do not positively disclaim my right to commendation: in the latter case I lie indirectly. The intention or willingness to deceive is here apparent, and in this is involved lying.

A very common lie of vanity is the violation of truth which persons indulge relative to their age, especially if they are advanced in life, and are unmarried.

(7.) *Lies of Flattery.*

796. Coarse and indiscriminate flatterers lay it down as a rule, that they are to flatter all persons on the qualities which they have not. Hence they flatter the plain on their beauty; the weak, on their intellect; the dull, on their wit; believing, in the sarcastic narrowness of their conceptions, that no one possesses any self-knowledge.

(8.) *Lies of Fear—*

797. Those which proceed from a selfish dread of losing favor by speaking the truth: for instance, a child or a servant breaks a toy or a glass, and denies having done so; excuses made by negligent correspondents for not writing sooner, are, usually, lies of fear—fear of having forfeited favor by too long a silence.

This kind of lie often proceeds from a want of resolution to say “no,” when asked such questions as, “Is not my new gown pretty?” “Is not my new hat becoming?” “Is not my daughter agreeable?”

(9.) *Lies falsely called Lies of Benevolence.*

798. These are likewise occasioned by a selfish dread of losing favor, and provoking displeasure, by speaking the truth. Persons calling themselves benevolent, withhold disagreeable truths, and utter agreeable falsehoods, from a wish to give pleasure, or to avoid giving pain. If you say that you are looking ill, they tell you that you are looking well. If you express a fear that you are growing corpulent, they say you are only just so fat as



you ought to be. And they say this, not from the desire of flattering you, or from the malignant one of wishing to render you ridiculous by imposing on your credulity, but from the desire of making you pleased with yourself.

(10.) *Lies of Convenience.*

799. The sending a servant with a message of "not at home," to avoid the inconvenience of preparing to see visitors, is of this sort. Also, the assignment of false or trivial reasons for declining invitations, or for neglecting to keep engagements.

(11.) *Practical Lies—*

800. Lies *acted*, not uttered: such as, making an appearance beyond what the circumstances of the persons so deceiving really warrant; the custom at school of getting school-fellows to prepare exercises for them, or consenting to do the same office for others; and also, the practice of parents correcting their children's exercises, and thereby enabling them to put a deceit on the teacher.

An anecdote, in point, may be found, under the Fifth Commandment, on the subject of parental duty. [ART. 633.]

(12.) *Lies of Mental Reservation.*

801. This species of lie has been justified by popish writers, but deserves universal execration, because it subverts all confidence between man and man. It *consists* in uttering successively a few words aloud, and then muttering or mentally repeating other words, which totally alter their meaning; than which, it is impossible to conceive a baser attempt to deceive.

(13.) *Falsehoods of History.*

802. Truth is violated in history, when the principal facts are blended with doubtful or fictitious circumstances; when the conduct of liars and intriguers, of public robbers and murderers, is varnished over with the false glare of heroism and of glory; and when the actions of upright men are, without sufficient evidence, attributed to knavery or to the influence of fanaticism; when the writer construes actions and events, and attributes to the actors motives and designs in accordance with his own prejudices and passions, and interweaves

his opinions and deductions as if they were a portion of the authenticated records of historical fact.

There are certain *historical novels* which are deserving of censure, as distorting facts, and leading those who read them from historical verity.

(14.) *Falsehoods of Scientific Works.*

803. Truth is violated by men of science, when they give an inaccurate statement of the results of their observations or experiments; when, either through carelessness or design, they give an unfair representation of the facts and principles in nature, in order to support a favorite system or hypothesis; and when they studiously keep out of view the various circumstances in which every fact should be contemplated.

(15.) *Falsehoods in the Literary World.*

804. Truth is violated in the literary world, when the editor of a magazine or a review writes an article, and addresses it to himself, as if it came from the pen of another: when, for the sake of gain, or to gratify a friend, he bestows encomiums on a work which is unworthy of the attention of the public; or when, to gratify a mean, or revengeful passion, he misrepresents, or abuses the literary productions of his opponents; or when an author writes a review of his own work, and imposes it on the public, as if it were the decision of an impartial critic.

(16.) *Falsehoods of Controversy.*

805. Truth is violated by controversialists, when they bring forward, in support of any position, arguments which they are conscious are either weak or unsound; when they appear more anxious to display their skill and dexterity, and to obtain a victory over their adversaries, than to vindicate the cause of truth; when sneers, sarcasms, and personal reproaches, are substituted in the room of substantial arguments; when they misrepresent the sentiments of their opponents, by stating them in terms which materially alter their meaning; and when they palm upon them doctrines and opinions which they entirely disavow.

(17.) *Falsehoods of Commercial Transactions.*

806. These have been enumerated under the head of the Eighth Commandment.

(18.) *Falsehoods of Signs.*

807. Truth is violated by *signs* as well as by words: as, when we point with our finger in a wrong direction, when a traveler is inquiring about the road he should take; when an American ship hoists British colors; when flags of truce are violated; when spies insinuate themselves into society as upright men, for the purpose of entrapping the unwary; when fires are lighted, or put out, to deceive mariners at sea; and when signals of distress are counterfeited by ships at sea, for the purpose of decoying into their power the ships of an enemy.

(19.) *Falsehoods which are not Lies—*

808. That is, which are not criminal. Are there any such? How does Paley answer this question?

Paley answers this question in the affirmative as follows:—

*First*, “Where no one is deceived; which is the case in parables, fables, novels, jests, tales to create mirth, ludicrous embellishments of a story, where the declared design of the speaker is not to inform, but to divert; compliments in the subscription of a letter; a servant’s denying his master (to be at home, when he is); a prisoner pleading ‘not guilty;’ an advocate asserting the justice, or his belief of the justice, of his client’s cause. In such instances no confidence is destroyed, because none was reposed; no promise to speak the truth is violated, because none was given, or understood to be given.”

809. Upon these remarks of Dr. Paley, it is important, by way of correction, to observe—

(1.) Of the greater number of cases here specified, there is no falsehood either implied or expressed, for they are objects of imagination merely, and not of belief; and when they cease to hold this position, and are addressed to the intellect as realities, they are no longer innocent.

(2.) When the common understanding among men of

the signification of certain expressions is not violated, a declaration is not a lie, although, in the common meaning of the terms used, there would be a falsehood; as in closing a letter, when a person says, "I am your obedient servant," though the letter itself may contain a refusal to obey or to serve the correspondent. By such complimentary language no one is misled; and yet it is advisable to close a letter in other terms when these do not express the literal fact.

(3.) When a person at home instructs a servant to tell visitors that he is "*not at home*," although some visitors may understand the language to mean that he does not wish to see visitors, yet the use of such language is to be condemned: because it is not necessary to use it, and because the use of it cannot fail to have a corrupting tendency on the mind of a servant, and further, because some visitors would be deceived by it.

It is said of Dr. Johnson, that he would not allow his servants to lie in this way. "A servant's strict regard for truth," said he, "must be weakened by such a practice. A philosopher may know that it is merely a form of denial; but few servants are such distinguishers. If I accustom a servant to tell a lie for me, have I not reason to apprehend that he will tell many more for himself?"

(4.) Among the multiplicity of falsehoods which are practiced in legal processes, the system of pleading "*not guilty*," is one that appears perfectly useless. It is used alike by the guilty and the not guilty, by a legal necessity, at the expense of literal truth. The only vindication in any person, on trial, using it, is, that no man is obliged (legally) to criminate himself, and that the known signification of his pleading "not guilty," is, that he does not *acknowledge* himself to be guilty; that he demands the right of trial, and his innocence is to be presumed until the contrary is proved by legal evidence.

(5.) However difficult it may be, in some cases, for a conscientious *advocate* to discharge his *professional duties* without impairing his moral feelings, or departing, in any degree, from the laws of morality, the difficulty is not insuperable. If every man be entitled to the advantage of law, and if no man ought to be condemned but by legal evidence, he discharges a most important duty



—important in regard to our lives and liberties—who employs his talents and acquirements in obtaining *legal* justice for his client. He may present his case in the most favorable light of which it is capable, without any violation of truth.

[For a full discussion of this point, read Whewell's Elements, vol. i. pp. 282-5.]

810. Dr. Paley, in his *second* answer to the question, "Are there falsehoods which are not criminal?" affirms that "falsehoods are not lies, that is, are not criminal, where the person to whom you speak has no right to know the truth; or, more properly, when little or no inconvenience results from the want of confidence."

811. Upon this answer of Dr. Paley the following remarks may be offered:—

(1.) To the plea that the questioner has no right to know the truth, it is proper to reply, that the questioner has a right not to be told a lie, for all men have such a right. By answering his question at all, I give him a right to a true answer. If I take my stand on the ground that he has no right to an answer, I must give him no answer. I may tell him that he has no right to an answer.

Every man to whom we profess to communicate the truth has a right to know it. We thus lead him to believe that we mean to impart to him the desired information. We are, therefore, not at liberty, consistently with justice, to use any stratagems to deceive an enemy, which are opposed to any promise of sincerity, either expressed or implied. Other stratagems, in war, are not to be condemned; because they might be expected, and provided against, and they form a regular part of the system of destruction which war pursues. It is here supposed, however, that the war is not unjust, on the part of those who use the stratagem referred to.

Dr. Whewell has considered some cases in which a refusal to give an answer, would constitute an answer, and where a false answer is justified on the ground of necessity, to avoid conflict with other moral laws. In such cases, a lie is not to be judged of by common rules.

[See Whewell's Elements, vol. i. pp. 280-282, 290-302.]

812. The view which has been taken of this difficult topic, by Professor Dick, in his Lectures, is, perhaps, as

satisfactory as any that can be found elsewhere; and is the following:—

Every man has not a right to hear the truth when he chooses to demand it. We are not bound to answer every question which may be proposed to us. In such cases we may be silent, or we may give as much information as we please, and suppress the rest. If the person afterward discovers that the information was partial, he has no title to complain, because he had not a right even to what he obtained; and we are not guilty of a falsehood unless we made him believe, by something which we said, that the information was complete.

We are at liberty to put off, with an evasive answer, the man who attempts to draw from us what we ought to conceal.

On the ground of a want of right to truth, some justify false information given to an assassin who is in quest of his intended victim, and false promises made to a robber or a tyrant who has extorted them by violence. It does not serve much purpose to discuss extreme cases, which rarely occur; and it is hazardous to lay down a rule which may in any degree lessen our reverence for truth. We have a choice, when we are exposed to danger, either to sin, or to suffer; and if there be any doubt with respect to the lawfulness of an expedient, every man of a tender conscience will take the safer side, by doing what appears to be his duty, and will leave the consequences to Providence.

813. (2.) The other form in which Dr. Paley presents his views, is, if possible, still more objectionable: it is founded on the principle of expediency; and allows, or rather authorizes us, to utter falsehoods as often as we can induce ourselves to believe that little inconvenience will result from the want of confidence. No maxim, more anti-scriptural, or more immoral in its tendency, can be conceived. It is substituting as the rule of moral conduct, in the room of the will of God, our own limited and partial views of the consequences of actions. Will not human beings, in applying this rule, think as much of the convenience which the falsehood will yield to themselves, as of the inconvenience which will result to others?

IV. *Nature and Obligation of a Promise.*

814. No obligation can be stronger than that which attaches to the fulfillment of a declaration, or promise ; and the man who feels not its force, irrespective of the effect which a character for fidelity, or the opposite, will have on his rank in human estimation, is already deeply depraved.

The obligation appears from the arguments already adduced to show the importance of truth : promises are included in the bearings of those arguments.

The authority of God on this subject is decisive : “ All liars shall have their part in the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone ; which is the second death.”

When an individual, by an engagement, has transferred to his neighbor one of the gifts which God had bestowed upon him, the latter has the same right to it which the original proprietor had before the transfer ; and if it be withheld from him, he has the same right to use force for the recovery of it as for the recovery of any other article of his property.

815. It is not more manifest that a promise is obligatory, than that it is obligatory in the sense in which the promiser knew, at the time, the promisee received it. The expectation excited by the promise, is nothing more than the promiser was aware of ; and to this extent he is clearly bound to fulfill his word. He has knowingly and voluntarily conveyed to another person a right to its performance.

Promises are binding in the plain and natural meaning of the terms in which they are conveyed.

816. To illustrate this position, the following example is employed by Dr. Paley : Temures promised the garrison of Sebastian, that, if they would surrender, *no blood should be shed*. The garrison surrendered ; and Temures buried them all alive. Now, in one sense, he fulfilled the promise, and in the sense, too, in which he intended it at the time ; but not in the sense in which the garrison of Sebastian actually received it, nor in the sense in which Temures himself knew that the garrison received it ; which last sense was the sense in which he was in conscience bound to perform it.

817. If we knowingly and voluntarily, by *signs* merely,

not less than by language, awaken expectation in another, that is, if our *conduct* toward any person be such as designedly, on our part, to produce a natural expectation on his, we are as much bound by the laws of morality to fulfill this expectation, as if it had been excited by a promise in words.

S18. It becomes all, therefore, as they value their own peace and respectability of character, and more especially does it become those of a warm temperament, of an ardent and generous disposition, to deliberate, to weigh well the import of their words, before making a promise, lest they be led by surprise, or good-nature, or opportunity, to encourage expectations, which, without doing injustice to themselves, or to their families, or to the interests of the community, they may not be able to fulfill. When, from whatever cause, such promises are made, we find ourselves placed in trying circumstances—trying to our virtue and happiness; and though the result may not impair our integrity, it may greatly affect the estimation in which we are held, and consequently our power of doing good.

S19. The question respecting the obligation of *extorted promises* is argued by Paley without coming to any definite decision—a necessary result of the kind of argument which he pursues.

Dr. Dewar speaks with more decision; and maintains that extorted promises are binding in every case in which the thing promised is lawful—that is, when the promise is of that nature that it may be performed without infringing on my duty to God, to my neighbor, or myself. If the extorted promise refers to what is in itself unlawful, of course it ought not to be performed.

S20. A promise or engagement may be highly criminal, from the time and manner in which it was made and the dispositions in which it originated, and yet it may be unlawful to break it.

The illustration is given by Paley.

S21. To the question, “In what cases are promises not binding,” it may be briefly replied, that a man is morally bound to fulfill his engagements, whether the person to whom the promise was made, or with whom the contract was entered into, has any power, or not, to enforce the fulfillment.



He can only be released from his obligation by a *physical incapacity of performing*, or by the *previous unlawfulness of the stipulation* into which he has entered.

He may, and he ought to feel the sinfulness of having promised or engaged to perform, what by no exertions on his part he can possibly accomplish; but he can have no ground for moral disapprobation for not doing that which to him is impossible. If he was aware of this impossibility at the time that he made the engagement, he is very criminal, inasmuch as he has fraudulently awakened expectations, knowing that it was beyond his power to gratify them.

If it be immoral in us to perform a certain action, it cannot be lawful for us to do it; and consequently we are not bound to do it, merely because we have entered into an engagement to that effect. We may, and it is very proper that we should, suffer from remorse, for having promised or contracted to do what was in itself sinful in us in any circumstances to perform, but we can feel none in consequence of our non-performance. We have just cause to regret an error; but to fulfill our engagement could only furnish an additional ground of self-condemnation.

The criminality of such promises lies in making them; the sincerity of our repentance is proved by breaking them.

822. The case of Herod, of Judea, furnishes a memorable example of an unlawful promise and oath. He promised to his daughter-in-law, "that he would give her whatsoever she asked, even to the half of his kingdom." There was nothing exceptionable in the terms in which Herod made his promise. It is presumed that he had a right to give away the half of his kingdom. But he could have none to take away the lives of innocent human beings. So far, therefore, from being bound by his oath to comply with the unlawful demand of Herodias, he was laid under the strongest moral obligation, for the reasons already assigned to resist and refuse it.

823. It is the acceptance, either expressed or implied, that constitutes the obligation of a promise; and not the simple promise itself, which is merely a declaration on the part of the promiser of his willingness to be bound. If I have promised to give another a certain sum of

money, but he declared that he would not accept it, I am released.

824. A promise is not binding which was suspended on a *condition*, if the condition is not performed. The promisee has lost his right, or rather had no right till his part of the stipulation shall have been fulfilled. In a word, a promise ceases to be binding when the person to whom it was made releases the promiser from his engagement.

*Promises that are not binding.*

825. (1.) Promises are not binding, where they *contradict a former promise*; because the performance is then unlawful.

(2.) *Erroneous* promises are not binding in certain cases: as where the error proceeds from the mistake or misrepresentation of the promisee; because a promise evidently supposes the truth of the account which the promisee relates in order to obtain it.

Again, when the promise is understood by the promisee to proceed upon a certain supposition, or when the promiser apprehended it to be so understood, and that supposition turns out to be false. Illustrations of both these cases will be found in Paley.

V. *Effects of a universal and complete Observance of the Ninth Commandment.*

826. Were falsehood universally detested, and the love of truth universally cherished, and veracity practiced, a most desirable change would be effected in the condition of mankind. The vast host of liars, perjurers, sharpers, seducers, slanderers, tale-bearers, quacks, thieves, swindlers, fraudulent dealers, false friends, flatterers, corrupt judges, sophists, hypocrites, and impostors in a religious garb, with the countless multitude of frauds, impositions, falsehoods, and distresses which have followed in their train, would instantly disappear from among men. Confidence would be restored throughout every department of social life. With beautiful simplicity and harmony would the world of trade move on in all its transactions. How many cares would vanish! how many ruinous litigations would be prevented. The tribunals of justice would be purified from every species of sophistry and de-

ceit. Numberless other changes, beneficial to man, would be at once introduced and perpetuated.

[Professor Dick's Lectures on Moral Law ; Dick's Philosophy of Religion ; Secker's Lectures ; Dewar's Moral Philosophy.]

777. What crime is expressly forbidden in the ninth precept ?
778. What breach of this precept is next mentioned ?
- 779, 780. In what other methods may the ninth precept be violated in courts of justice ?
781. Explain the crime of slander ?
782. Is speaking the truth, to the disadvantage of others, always innocent ?
783. How may this precept be transgressed without speaking ?
784. May this precept be transgressed even by speaking good of others ?
785. What is the design of this precept ?
786. How can it be shown that veracity, or the uttering of truth, is of immense importance to intelligent beings ?
787. How has the Creator guarded human society against such disastrous effects ?
788. How may truth be defined ?
789. What is a lie ?
790. What is meant by lies of malignity ?
791. What are jocose lies ?
792. Benevolent lies ?
793. Pious lies, or frauds ?
794. Lies of equivocation ?
795. Lies of vanity ?
796. Lies of flattery ?
797. Lies of fear ?
798. Lies falsely called lies of benevolence ?
799. What are lies of convenience ?
800. Practical lies ?
801. Lies of mental reservation ?
802. Falsehoods of history ?
803. Falsehoods of scientific works ?
804. Falsehoods in the literary world ?
805. Falsehoods of controversy ?
806. Falsehoods of commercial transactions ?
807. Falsehoods of signs ?
808. Falsehoods which are not lies ?
809. What remarks may be offered upon this answer of Dr. Paley ?
810. What is Paley's second answer to the question, "Are there falsehoods which are not criminal?"
811. What remarks should be made upon this answer ?
812. What view of this difficult topic has been given by Professor Dick ?
813. In what more objectionable form has Dr. Paley stated further his views ?
814. How is the obligation of a promise demonstrated ?
815. In what sense are promises to be interpreted ?
816. By what example does Dr. Paley illustrate this position ?
817. May not promises be made by signs, as well as by words ?
818. In view of this position, what counsel is appropriate and important ?
819. Are extorted promises binding ?
820. What other case, a rare one, may be mentioned in which a promise is binding ?
821. In what cases are promises not binding ?
822. What memorable example of an unlawful promise and oath have we in the case of Herod, of Judea ?

823. Is a promise binding, if the acceptance has not been expressly or virtually signified?

824. Is a conditional promise binding, if the condition be not performed by the promisee?

825. What other sorts of promises are not binding?

826. Effects of a universal observance of this precept?

#### THE TENTH COMMANDMENT.

*"Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's house; thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's wife; nor his man-servant, nor his maid-servant, nor his ox, nor his ass; nor anything that is thy neighbor's."*

##### I. *Meaning of the word Covet.*

827. "The affection or emotion expressed by the term *covet*, or *desire*, is not in itself sinful, but becomes so by reason of the *circumstances* or the *degree* in which it is indulged. Accordingly, it is not simply and absolutely said in this commandment, 'Thou shalt not covet,' as in the preceding commandments, 'Thou shalt not kill,' 'Thou shalt not steal,' &c., but a variety of *objects* are specified, toward which, in their relations to others, this inward emotion is not to go forth. In the present connection, the word strictly signifies to desire to have as our own what belongs to our neighbor, to his loss or prejudice, or without his consent; and it implies that degree of propensity or appetite toward an object which usually prompts to the obtaining of it, or which immediately precedes a volition to that effect.

"There can be no harm in desiring a neighbor to *sell* me his house for the real value of it; but it is wrong to desire to possess the house by means of injustice or violence. That coveting a man's wife also, which is here forbidden, is not so much the desire of an adulterous intercourse with her while she remains his wife, though this is expressly forbidden, as desiring that she may cease to be his wife (either by divorce, or death), and become the wife of the coveting person. In like manner, coveting my neighbor's house is nothing else than earnestly wishing that it may cease to be his property and become mine. The prohibition against coveting forbids also all the *actual effects* that legitimately flow from the harboring and cherishing the interdicted affections and passions."

[Bush on Exodus.]

##### II. *Design of this Precept.*

828. (1.) The *direct object of this precept* is not our ex-



ternal actions, but the desires; and hence it appears to be supplementary to the other precepts. We have shown indeed that those also must be understood to extend to the feelings and affections: they proceeded from a Being who will not be satisfied with outward obedience. But lest men might not discover this truth, and should plead that, in conforming to the letter of the law, they had fulfilled its demands, this precept is added to show that the law in its prohibitions and requisitions extends to the inward springs of action.

(2.) It may have been *another object* in adding this precept, to show the necessity of regulating and restraining the desires, as indispensable to the observance of the other precepts. The desires, when improperly, inordinately indulged, naturally lead to the violation of every other precept of the divine law, and constitute the source of more than one half of all the evils that afflict the human race. By forbidding us to desire anything that belongs to our neighbor, it aims at eradicating the principle which might lead us to injure him in his person, his character, or any of his rights. It is the safeguard of all the precepts of the Second Table; and it comes in at the close, to remind us that the heart must be pure as well as the life.

(3.) Another object of this precept would seem to be, to *forbid all such dissatisfaction with our lot*, as might lead us to form intentions and make endeavors to change it by any means inconsistent with justice and love to our neighbor, or inconsistent with entire submission to the will of God.

The reason that we covet the things which belong to our neighbor, is, that we are not fully pleased with the lot which Providence has assigned us. A contented state of mind would remove the cause of those irregular affections, which it is the design of this precept to restrain.

### III. *Law of the Desires.*

829. The good things of this life being the gifts of God, for which all are to be thankful to him; the desiring, with due moderation, and submission to God, a comfortable share of them, is very natural and right: the wishing that our share were larger, is, in the case of many persons, so far from a sin, that the endeavor diligently to enlarge it is part of their duty. The wish that it was equal to that

of another person, is not wishing ill to him, but good to ourselves. "A man may desire an increase of his property without having a covetous, or even discontented heart. Such wishes are the moving spring to all worldly enterprise and prosperity, without which the various businesses of life would languish and die." Moreover, not only the wish, but the effort to obtain what belongs to another may, in proper circumstances, be perfectly innocent: we may really have occasion for it; he may be well able to bestow it; or he may have occasion for something of ours in return: and on these mutual wants of men all commerce and trade is founded, which the Creator, unquestionably, designed to be carried on, because he has made all countries to abound in some things and left them deficient in others.

*Prohibited Desires.*

830. (1.) Those which are *unsuitable* and *immoderate*, as, for example:—

If our neighbor cannot lawfully part with his property, nor we lawfully receive it, and yet we desire to have it. One instance of this kind is expressed in the precept, "Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's wife:" another is, if we desire a person who possesses anything in trust, or under certain limitations, to give or sell it in breach of that trust or those limitations; or, if he can part with it, but is not willing, and we entertain thoughts of acquiring it by force and fraud, or of being revenged on him for his refusal, this is also highly blamable; for why should he not be left in quiet possession of his own? Indeed, the bare act of pressing and importuning persons contrary to their interest, or even their inclination only, is in some degree wrong; for it is one way of extorting things from them, or at least of giving them trouble when we have no right to give it.

(2.) *Our desires are criminal, if they lead us to envy others*, that is, to be uneasy at their imagined superior happiness, and to wish them ill, or take pleasure in any harm that befalls them; for this turn of mind will prompt us to do them ill, if we can, as indeed a great part of the mischief that is done in the world proceeds from envy. "Wrath is cruel, and anger is outrageous, but who is able to stand before envy?" Prov. xxvii. 4.

(3.) Though our selfish desires were to raise in us no malignity against our fellow-creatures; yet if they *tempt us to murmur against our Creator*, and either to speak or think ill of that distribution of things which His providence has made, this is great impiety and injustice, because He has an absolute right to dispose of the work of his hand as he pleases, and always exercises this right, both with justice, and with goodness, toward us.

(4.) Our desires, of course, are criminal, *when they contemplate any act or possession forbidden by the laws of God, or by any just human law.*

#### IV. *Forms of Covetousness, or Irregular Desire.*

831. Of covetousness there are two prominent forms: *avarice*, or an inordinate and selfish regard for money; and *ambition*, or an inordinate desire of power, superiority, and distinction.

##### (1.) *Avarice.*

832. Avarice arises from the perception "that money answereth all things." Riches *in themselves*, indeed, are no evil. Nor is the bare *possession* of them wrong. Nor is the *desire to possess* them sinful, provided that desire exist under certain restrictions. For in almost every stage of civilization money is requisite to procure the conveniences, and even the necessities of life: to desire it, therefore, as the means of life, is as innocent as to live. In its higher application it may be made the instrument of great relative usefulness; to seek it then, as a means of doing good, is not a vice, but a virtue.

But perceiving that money is so important an agent in society, that it not only fences off the wants and woes of poverty, but that, like a center of attraction, it can draw to itself every object of worldly desire from the farthest circumference; the temptation arises of desiring it inordinately; of even desiring it for its own sake; of supposing that the instrument of procuring so much good must itself possess intrinsic excellence.

833. With respect to the passion for money, the most obvious and general distinction, perhaps, is that which divides it into the desire of *getting*, as contradistinguished from the desire of *keeping* that which is already possessed.

These divisions may be *subdivided*: the former, into worldliness, rapacity, and an ever-craving, all-consuming prodigality; the latter, into parsimony, niggardliness, and avarice.

834. By *worldliness*, is meant cupidity in its earliest, most plausible, and prevailing form; not yet sufficiently developed to be conspicuous to the eye of man, yet sufficiently active to incur the prohibition of God.

*Rapacity*, is covetousness *grasping*—"making haste to be rich." It is a passion that compels every other feeling to its aid; the day seems too short for it. Determined to gratify itself, it overlooks the morality of the means, despises alike the tardiness of industry, and the scruples of integrity, and thinks only of the readiest way to success.

*Parsimony*, is covetousness *parting with its life-blood*. It is the frugality of selfishness; the art of parting with as little as possible.

*Avarice*, is covetousness *hoarding*. It is the love of money in the abstract, or for its own sake, and not as a means of procuring other gratifications. It is regarded as an *ultimate good*. Other vices have a particular view to enjoyment (falsely so called), but the very term *miser*, is a confession of the misery which attends avarice; for, in order to save his gold, the miser robs himself. He cannot be said to possess wealth; wealth possesses him.

*Prodigality*, though strictly opposed to avarice, or hoarding, is quite compatible with cupidity. The character which Sallust gives of Cataline, that "he was covetous of other men's wealth, while he squandered his own," is of very common occurrence. Men must be covetous, that they may be prodigal. Prodigality strengthens covetousness by keeping it in constant activity, and covetousness strengthens prodigality, by slavishly feeding its voracious appetite. [Consult "Mammon," by Dr. Harris.]

835. Covetousness leads to the commission of almost every crime: the apostle Paul declares it to be the root of all evil. The Scriptures hold up to our view its debasing influence on Balaam, who loved the wages of unrighteousness: on Judas, who, for thirty pieces of silver, sold his divine master: on Demas, who deserted the ministry of the gospel, having loved this present world: on Demetrius and his associates, who, for the sake of



gain, zealously supported a system of idolatrous superstition.

What instigates the murderer, in defiance of the authority of God and his own conscience, to take away the life of a fellow-creature? It is, in many cases, the inordinate desire of property. To the same cause we may trace all the crimes of persons who render jails and bridewells necessary: theft, swindling, robbery, forgery, smuggling, perjury.

The influence of this vice is perniciously felt in every situation in life: by the poor, and the rich, by the young, and the aged.

The miserly man is the prey of restless and contending passions—of falsehoods, and rapacious schemes—of anxieties, and perplexities, and disappointments. He is not only miserable himself, but becomes a moral nuisance to the neighborhood around him; stinting his own family of necessary comforts; oppressing the widow and the fatherless: grasping from others everything within his reach.

836. Avarice has plundered palaces, churches, seats of learning, and repositories of art; it has polluted courts of judicature and the tribunals of justice; it has corrupted many of the ministers of religion; it has ground whole nations to poverty under the load of taxation; it has drenched large territories in human gore. It was the cursed love of gold that excited the Spaniards to ravage the territories of Mexico and Peru; to violate every principle of justice and humanity; to perpetrate the most horrid cruelties upon the unoffending inhabitants.

The same principle commenced, and carries on, that abominable traffic, *the slave-trade*, which has entailed misery in its worst forms on millions of the sons of Africa.

## (2.) *Ambition.*

837. This passion is manifested in a greater or less degree, by men of all ranks and characters, and in every situation in life. It consists in an inordinate love of greater power or distinction, and in the effort to obtain it, than is actually possessed.

838. The following considerations show the sinfulness of this passion:—

(1.) It is an impeachment of the wisdom, and a dispar-

agement of the goodness of God, to give way to impatience and discontent with his allotments, and inordinately to desire the station, the influence, the blessings, possessed by others.

(2.) It is ruinous in its influence on the best interests of communities.

Does it aim at *literary honor and distinction*—how often has ambition, in this way, sought its object at the expense of truth, by disparaging, if not denying, the character, the government, and the providence of God; by vilifying the revelation which he has given of his will, and of his merciful designs; and by flattering the vanity, and stimulating the sensuality and corruption of man! It is this guilty principle that has filled the world with a species of literature with which it is dangerous to be acquainted; which is the vehicle of infidelity in all its forms of refinement and coarseness, which addresses itself, in sarcasm, in wit, in ridicule, in polluting insinuation, to the passions of the reader. It exists under the garb of history, of poetry, of philosophy, and of periodical journals; assailing the highest interests of man as a moral, a religious, an immortal being.

Does Ambition seek *political distinction and power*—how destructive has it been in this way in all ages of the world! To what madness and crime has it led individuals, both in ancient and in modern times! If we beheld hamlets and cities in ruins; the means of subsistence, the domestic enjoyments of multitudes wasted; and war spreading misery and death over the face of that world on which the Creator lavishes his bounty, we should only witness some of the evils which cruel and hard-hearted Ambition voluntarily produces.

#### V. *The opposite of Covetousness—Contentment.*

839. In order to exercise this virtue, it is not necessary that we should feel indifferent to the evils connected with the circumstances in which we are placed. On the contrary, it implies the existence of events not in themselves agreeable to us; but to which we feel it to be our duty to reconcile our minds, by moderating our desires after unattainable good, and by bearing with equanimity and resignation our difficulties and trials.

*Virtues included in Contentment.*

840. (1.) It implies a frame of mind and course of life so virtuous that its possessor is at peace with himself.

(2.) It implies such a conviction of the infinite excellence of the divine government, and such a humble hope of divine favor, and such a sense of personal unworthiness, as will lead to a cheerful acquiescence in all the dispensations of divine providence.

841. We observe that vanity sometimes produces the effect which should always flow from religion. Some persons are highly pleased with themselves, and everything which pertains to them. Their houses, their wives, their children, their property, are so much better than those of others, that they have no wish to make an exchange; and wrapt up in the dream of superiority, they allow the world to go on in its course, without envying any one, or disturbing any one, except by an ostentatious display of their advantages.

842. The tendency of the tenth precept is to promote the happiness of mankind, while it honors the God of providence.

If it were engraven upon our hearts; if our thoughts and affections were under its control, there would be an end to the complaints and murmurs, the cares and anxieties, which agitate our minds; the world would no longer present the disgusting spectacle of a field of battle, where emulation, wrath, strife, deceit, and violence act their part, men prey upon one another, and all contend who shall be conquerors in the struggle for honor and wealth.

[Dewar's Moral Philosophy; Professor Dick's Lectures; Secker's Works; Dick's Philosophy of Religion.]

827. What is the meaning of the word covet?

828. What is the direct object or design of this precept?

829. To what extent may desire be lawfully indulged?

830. Since then not every sort of desires is forbidden in this precept, what desires are forbidden?

831. What prominent forms of covetousness may here properly be considered?

832. Whence does our liability to this sin arise?

833. How may the passion for money be distinguished?

834. What is denoted by the various forms of the passion for money—by worldliness, by rapacity, by parsimony, by avarice, by prodigality?

835. What are some of the evil tendencies of covetousness?

836. What are some of the bad effects of avarice upon communities and nations?

837. Where is ambition manifested?

838. How does the sinfulness of this passion appear?

839. What is to be understood by contentment—the duty implied in the Tenth Commandment?

840. What virtues are included in the exercise of contentment?

841. Is there any disposition beside religion which sometimes produces contentment?

842. What then is the happy tendency of an observance of the Tenth Commandment?

## CHAPTER V.

### MORAL LESSONS OF BIOGRAPHY.

843. THE duties of man have, in the preceding portions of this work, been drawn, (1.) From the two fundamental laws of Love to God, and Love to Man. (2.) From our Savior's Golden Rule. (3.) From St. Paul's exhibition of love and its manifestations. (4.) From the principle of Love to Man, viewed under certain general relations. (5.) From the Ten Precepts of the Moral Law, explained and amplified by a reference to other preceptive parts of the sacred volume.

844. There is still another source of valuable instruction in human duty. The *biography* of those who have carefully studied, and most exactly conformed to, the various delineations of duty furnished in the sacred scriptures, supplies a very pleasing and instructive means of learning how to feel and act under the varied circumstances, and in the various professions of human life.

845. A large amount of valuable biography, drawn by an unerring hand, is combined in the sacred scriptures; and this may be regarded as a *practical illustration of moral law*, either in the form of obedience or transgression; and may serve the purpose of imitation or of admonition.

This remark may be applied to biography in general, and serves to illustrate the value of this species of literature.

846. Preëminent above all other characters is the *human character and conduct of Jesus Christ*—the beautiful and the perfect example of human virtue which he exhibited to his disciples, and to the world.

Next to his biography, in value, contained in the New Testament, must be ranked the biography of those remarkable men and women that lived in the first and



purest age of the Christian church—the biography of those who imbibed most largely his spirit, and conformed most closely to his example. Among these, perhaps, stands preëminent the apostle Paul.

Subsequent centuries of the Christian church have contributed valuable additions to the biographical literature contained in the sacred volume. The Reformation in the time of Luther gave birth and prominence to many illustrious examples of the Christian and human virtues; and, from that period to this, divine providence has been greatly multiplying their number, so that in our own day biographical literature is sufficiently extensive to constitute, of itself, a respectable and a most valuable library—valuable, as furnishing one of the most agreeable, practical, and impressive modes by which a knowledge of human duty may be learned to advantage.

This remark is limited to the memoirs of moral and Christian characters, and is not, obviously, to be extended to the memoirs of the base, the corrupt, the profligate, unless written by men of moral and Christian principle for moral ends and uses.

In the annals of a truly Christian benevolence, since the days of the apostle Paul, no man stands forth to better advantage and with a stronger claim upon our admiration than the distinguished HOWARD of England. The greater part of his life he devoted to the alleviation of human wretchedness where he traveled, exposing himself to the infected atmospheres of hospitals and jails, in order to improve the condition of the unfortunate. In this labor of love, he traveled three times through France, four times through Germany, five times through Holland, twice through Italy, once through Spain and Portugal, and also through Denmark, Sweden, Russia, Poland, and part of the Turkish empire, distributing benefits to the miserable wherever he appeared.

From realm to realm, with cross or crescent crowned,  
Where'er mankind and misery are found,  
O'er burning sands, deep waves, or wilds of snow,  
Mild Howard journeying seeks the house of woe.  
Down many a winding step to dungeons dank,  
Where anguish wails aloud and fetters clank,  
To caves bestrewed with many a moldering bone,  
And cells whose echoes only learn to groan;  
Where no kind bars a whispering friend disclose,  
No sunbeam enters, and no zephyr blows;—

He treads, inemulous of fame or wealth,  
 Profuse of toil, and prodigal of health;  
 Leads stern-eyed justice to the dark domains,  
 If not to sever, to release the chains;  
 Gives to her babes the self-devoted wife,  
 To her fond husband liberty and life,—  
 Onward he moves! disease and death retire;  
 And murmuring demons hate him and admire.

DARWIN.

847. The prominent object of such works, when properly written, is to teach men, women, and children, their duty in the various relations and circumstances of life, *by example*—the most persuasive of all methods of instruction.

A long catalogue of memoirs might here be furnished that are especially worthy of perusal and study. The nineteenth century abounds in such written examples of “whatsoever things are true,” of “whatsoever things are honest,” of “whatsoever things are just,” of “whatsoever things are pure,” of “whatsoever things are lovely,” and of “whatsoever things are of good report.”

In learning our duties from the biographies of Scripture, great assistance and entertainment may be derived from Robinson’s *Scripture Characters*, and Hunter’s *Sacred Biography*.

In no manner more fitting can we close a practical system of Moral Philosophy—of a philosophy worthy of that title—than by presenting a brief view of the morality of the Bible as it is embodied in the character and life of Jesus Christ, to the study and imitation of which we are impelled by the strongest of moral attractions, and by the high command of Heaven. In a moral sense—as a delineator and exemplar of human duty—he never had, he never can have, a rival. He is the light of the world; and if we would learn our duty, without mistake, it behooves us to walk in the light of his instructions, and of the living and perfect commentary of his example. We shall now present his character, substantially, as furnished by Bishop Wilson of Calcutta, and Dr. Paley.

*Moral Duty learned from the Character of Jesus Christ.*

848. There are, in the sacred scriptures, several prominent aspects of his remarkable character. (1.) He occupies the place of mediator between God and man. (2.) He sustains a private character adorned with every per-

sonal excellence. (3.) In his public character he appears as the Founder of the Christian Religion—the last, most perfect, and universal form of revealed truth.

Passing by the various offices sustained by him as Mediator, it falls within our present plan to view him only in his *private character, his character as a man.*

In this character he proposed himself as the *pattern and exemplar of every human excellence to his followers.* He assumed to embody the moral precepts of his religion in his own life, and to be himself all that he required of his followers. He reduced all his rules to the one direction of following his steps.

849. The *first* remark is, that neither as represented by his followers, nor as attacked by his enemies, is he charged with any personal vice. This is remarkable, for some stain pollutes the morals or the morality of every other teacher, and of every other lawgiver.

*Secondly*, in the histories which are left us of Jesus Christ, although very short, and although dealing in narrative, and not in observation or panegyric, we perceive, beside the absence of every appearance of vice, traces of devotion, humility, benignity, mildness, patience, prudence. *Traces* of these qualities, we say, because the qualities themselves are to be collected mostly from incidents; inasmuch as the terms themselves are almost never used of Christ in the Gospels, nor is any formal character of him drawn in any part of the New Testament.

850. His *piety and devotion to his Heavenly Father* are seen in his frequent retirement for solitary prayer; in his habitual giving of thanks; in his reference of the beauties and operations of nature to the bounty of Providence; in his earnest addresses to his Father, more particularly that short but solemn one before the raising of Lazarus from the dead; in teaching his disciples a prayer, which, for brevity, fullness of meaning, suitableness, and simplicity, stands unrivaled; in professing not to do his own will, but the will of his Father, to accomplish which, he said, was his meat and drink; and in directing every act to his Father's glory.

His trust in Him was uniform, strong, apparent on every occasion. There was, so far as we can judge, a continued communion going on between his Heavenly Father and himself. In the agony of the garden and

of the cross, holy trust, resignation, prayer, love to his Heavenly Father sustained him. His life, in the proper sense of the term, was a most pious and devout life; and yet there was nothing of the secluded and austere mixed with the devout in him. It was precisely a piety so expressed, and so mingled with all his conduct, as to furnish a perfect example to his followers.

851. Nothing was more apparent in our Lord than *genuine good-will, kindness, tenderness of heart*. His life was not one of strict justice merely, but of overflowing benignity. He went about to bless and console this sorrowing world.

His miracles were almost all acts of kindness and beneficence—healing all manner of disease, casting out devils, restoring sight to the blind, and even raising again the dead.

The *benignity* and affectionateness of his temper was seen in his treatment of children; in the tears which he shed over his falling country, and upon the death of his friend; in his prompt regard and relief to the sorrows of the widow of Nain, while she was following the dead body of her only son to the grave, that son being at once restored to her alive; in his noticing the widow's mite; in his parables of the good Samaritan, of the ungrateful servant, and of the Pharisee and Publican—of which parables no one but a man of humanity could have been the author.

The *benevolence* of Christ flowed forth in the forgiveness of injuries. Not a single word of resentment, nor any expression of personal displeasure, ever came out of his mouth. He was daily and hourly returning good for evil, till, on the cross, he prayed for the very wretches who were driving the nails into his hands and feet—"Father, forgive them; they know not what they do." This prayer for his enemies, at the moment of his suffering, though it has since been very properly imitated, was then, probably, new.

852. The *soft and gentle spirit of Christ* is everywhere apparent. "As a lamb dumb before his shearers, so he opened not his mouth." Instead of the ambition, the susceptibility of affronts, the self-confidence, the personal importance which appeared in other moral teachers, our Lord was uniformly gentle and lowly.



853. A prominent and noble trait in the character of Jesus was his *superiority to the world*—to the passions, objects, opinions, pleasures, indulgences, love of ease, regard to fame, riches, display, influence, and praise, which the Scriptures designate by the term world, and which have ever ensnared, under one form or other, all merely human teachers.

In our Savior we see nothing of a worldly spirit ; there was no courting of the great, no fawning over the persons of the noble, no haunting the palaces of kings, no deference to the authority of powerful and wicked men, no debates about human politics and temporal interests, no desires after worldly distinction and dominion.

On the contrary, never was there so unworldly a character, never such disinterestedness, never such superiority to all the glare, and bustle, and attraction of the world and worldly glory. *He estimated things as they really were, and acted simply and invariably upon that estimate.* He was not of the world : he was of another spirit, engaged in other pursuits, touched by other interests, bent on higher and nobler ends ; and in no respect is his example more perfect in itself, and more necessary to us, than in his “overcoming the world.”

854. He was perfect *master of the inferior appetites.* His *temperance* was pure, elevated, vigilant, uniform, and natural. His conduct was free from everything like excess. He wrought no miracle for the supply of his own wants—we hear of none of these wants. He pities the multitude, indeed, and feeds them miraculously ; but, for himself, he has not where to lay his head. While he sits instructing the Samaritan woman, he accounts that he has “meat to eat which his disciples know not of ;” while as to them they are compelled to go into the city to purchase food.

855. *Fortitude and constancy* are conspicuous in all his public life—that quality of mind which is compounded of courage, patience, and perseverance—*which knows not how to yield in a great undertaking*—which is daunted by no opposition, and faints under no discouragement—which endures contradiction, violence, injustice, oppression.

With what fortitude does he bear the incessant hostility and perverseness of the Jews ! With what constancy and boldness does he arraign the vices, and hypocrisy,

and cruelties of the Scribes and Pharisees ! When did he betray any symptoms of cowardice, or the fear of man ? When did he flee in dejection or irresolution ?

856. His *prudence* and *discretion* are discerned where prudence is most wanted, in his conduct upon trying occasions, and in answers to artful questions. He never invited attack by imprudence, nor provoked hostility by intemperate rashness. When no good could be effected in one place, he withdrew to another. The questions dictated by curiosity or craft he repelled by wisdom : proposing other questions, or inculcating a general doctrine, or softening reproof by the veil of a parable.

The forethought, the consideration of circumstances, the adaptation of means to the desired end, the disposition of the several parts of his doctrine to their proper purposes and to the class of his auditory, his determination under a choice of difficulties, his address in defending his disciples when accused, his apologies before the bigoted Jews, marked our Lord's wisdom. The human heart lay open before him ; difficult questions and sudden turns only served to display his consummate prudence. He " did all things well ;" his prudence was as conspicuous in the manner, as his benevolence in the execution of his designs.

857. As *additional illustrations of his prudence*, may be noted, his withdrawing, in various instances, from the first symptoms of tumult, and with the express care of conducting his ministry in quietness ; his declining of every species of interference with the civil affairs of the country (though in this particular he is not a model to us who are placed in different circumstances), as in the case of the adulterous woman, John viii. 1, and in his repulse of the application made to him to interpose his decision about a disputed inheritance ; his judicious, yet as it would seem, unprepared answers, in the case of the Roman tribute, in the difficulty concerning the interfering relations of a future state, as proposed to him in the instance of a woman who had married seven brethren ; and, more especially, in his reply to those who demanded from him an explanation of the authority by which he acted, which reply consisted in propounding a question to them, situated between the very difficulties into which they were insidiously endeavoring to draw him.

858. The Savior, *in his daily conduct, united all the various branches of moral excellence*, and exhibited in equal perfection the graces and virtues the most opposite to each other, without the proximate failings, or any decay in vigor and consistency. And in this respect our Lord surpassed all merely human examples of virtue.

*His virtues were unalloyed with the kindred failings.* His temperance was unaccompanied with severity; his fortitude was without rashness; his constancy without obstinacy; his self-denial without moroseness; his devotion and piety without indifference to the affairs of life. And so, on the other hand, his benevolence never sunk into weakness, his humility into fear of man, his love of retirement into inactivity, his tenderness into compliance with sin.

859. It is worthy also of remark, that *opposite and apparently contradictory graces were found in him in equal proportion*. His elevation of mind, and sublimity in the conception of divine things, were connected with the utmost ease and simplicity. His superiority to the world, and spirituality of affection, were equaled by his affability and freedom in conversing with mankind. His temperance and fortitude were adorned with the opposite graces of meekness and forbearance; his love and benignity with courage and decision of character; his compassion for sinners with the most pointed rebukes of the incorrigible and hypocritical.

His condescension in consorting with publicans and sinners, was united with the utmost purity and dignity; his incessant diligence, with suavity; his zeal in the service of God and in prosecuting his mission, with prudence and discretion.

The active were thus allied with the contemplative virtues, the strong with the tender, the heroical with the retired. Each virtue was free from the opposite defect, and accompanied with the opposite excellence.

860. Further than this; all was CARRIED TO THE UTMOST HEIGHT, AND CONTINUED IN ONE EVEN TENOR.

Christ had uniformity and consistency of virtue, in the strictest sense; he had strength of character. Power of every kind is less exhibited by violent efforts of short duration, than by a steady, unyielding agency and progression. It was not at one time, but at every time; not in

one situation, but in every kind of situation ; not at the beginning of his ministry, merely, but throughout it ; not in one or two respects, but in all, that the virtues of Christ were manifested.

And this at the greatest height of which the human nature is susceptible, and which the law of God requires. There is no flaw, no stain in our Lord's character ; not a single defect, much less any crime. It was *a perfect model for our imitation*. Christ had never occasion to retract any statement, to qualify any expression, to undo anything he ever said or did. No omission, no slip, no error, no misapprehension, no gap or interruption in the circle of human excellences, appeared in our blessed Savior.

861. The result of this combination and proportion of excellences was, that there was a PECULIAR HARMONY, loveliness, and moral symmetry in our Savior's personal character : that beauty of holiness which arises from the combination and just proportion of all the various elements of which it is composed. Everything was of a piece ; everything was most becoming ; everything was as it should be.

And this completes the picture. This shows that we have in our Lord the perfect model of every virtue for his disciples, both as it regards the separate graces of his character, and the union and combination of them in all their proportions, strength, and consistency.

862. It is impossible not to observe THE SUITABLENESS TO THE NECESSITIES OF MAN, which appears in the founder of Christianity thus becoming our example.

Man is led by example rather than by precept. He needed a Savior, not only to rescue him from guilt and death by his merits and grace, but to render virtue lovely and practicable, by his human and personal excellences.

863. *In the life of Christ, morality is set forth in action ;* it is embodied ; it is made visible to the mortal eye ; it is addressed to the mortal heart in the most attractive and engaging form. How essential then is it, that the character of Christ should hold a prominent place in a system of Moral Philosophy, which is only a system of human duty ! and yet, hitherto, this has been generally, if not universally omitted, or only introduced and noticed in the most cursory manner.



864. There was much, in the *class of character and station adopted by Christ*, which was adapted to our case.

(1.) He might have chosen any other, and been a perfect model of virtue: he might have appeared—except, perhaps, as his character as the Savior of the world was concerned—as a prince, a teacher of human or divine science; but such a life would not have been so easily imitable by the great mass of mankind. He therefore became like one of ourselves; *his life was spent in common affairs and duties*. His is a most holy, but an ordinary, familiar, every day life, passed in humble scenes and usual occurrences. This was exactly what proud, vain-glorious man needed.

(2.) Then our Lord's was a *suffering* character, and so yet further adapted to be our pattern in this world of suffering. Any other life might have been as pure, but it could not have been so consolatory. As a sufferer, his example is more frequently applicable, more deeply meditated on, more precisely suited to the condition and afflictions of his followers. The patient, enduring virtues are most conspicuous in him, as they are most needed by us.

(3.) The character of Christ was *calm and composed*. There was a freedom from violent emotions, an abstinence from excitement and disturbance throughout it. His emotions were chiefly those of benevolence, compassion, abhorrence of sin. These overpowered, on all occasions, the inferior passions; and were most directly in contrast with any charge of insincerity or enthusiasm, which his enemies might otherwise have imputed to him. Our Lord is precisely what he should be; he appeared, and did, and acted, and spoke, in every respect, as the founder of such a religion as Christianity required.

865. THE IMITATION OF JESUS CHRIST, IS A BRIEF, BUT COMPREHENSIVE DEFINITION OF THE DUTY, OF MAN: to feel and act as he would feel and act in all our various circumstances, is the utmost demand of duty. There are duties, indeed, which, from the very perfection of his character, were not exemplified formally in him—the duties of repentance, and of faith in a Redeemer; for he never sinned, and, therefore, never needed an atonement: but these are, nevertheless, to be regarded as only modifications of the genuine principle of love to God and

to his law, which appeared so perfectly in Jesus. An imitation, therefore, of this genuine principle, which appeared in him, will necessarily produce penitence and faith, in those who have offended God and transgressed his law.

The grand duty of men, therefore, is to imitate Jesus Christ, in all his personal and human excellences; and, consequently, to point out in what such imitation consists, is, and ought to be, a part of a full system of Moral Philosophy. Hence it occupies so prominent a place in this treatise; and will, it is hoped, be studied with more care, and practiced with more assiduity, than any other portion of it.

866. The *Christian philosophy* found in the Bible, takes a still higher aim, and a more comprehensive range. By means of its doctrines and facts, its promises and admonitions, its precepts and sanctions, as well as its incomparable biographies, it not only expounds moral duties, but *arrays before us the most powerful motives to be, and to do, what duty to God, to man, and to ourselves, requires.* Moral Philosophy assumes the humbler province of defining the duties of man, and offering the grounds upon which they rest, and perhaps, also, the motives existing for the prompt performance of those duties.

To give their just weight to the statements made respecting the duty of imitating Jesus Christ, it is a matter of some moment TO CONTRAST THE CHARACTER OF CHRIST WITH THAT OF ALL OTHERS, who have assumed to be founders of a new religion.

867. "We assert," says Bishop Wilson, "that there never was any religion but the Christian, which exhibited, in the person of its founder, a spotless model for his disciples to follow. We assert there never was any religion but the Christian, in which its author united excellence of example with purity of precept. We assert there never was any religion but the Christian, which professed to sum up all morality in the example of its legislator, and combined in it all the purest precepts, and the most lovely sentiments of moral excellence.

"I look around for the founder of a religion with whom I may compare Jesus Christ. I see the masters of the philosophic sects; I see the orators and respected sages of Greece and Rome: all is impure and debased.

I see Zeno, and Socrates, and Diogenes, and Epictetus, and Plato, and Aristotle; I see Cicero, and Xenophon, and the Catos, and Seneca: inconsistency, vanity, profligacy, folly, cowardice, revenge, idolatry, obscure the fame of all. I can discern no perfectly pure and unstained character; I can select no model for the imitation of mankind.

“And then, I object to all these names: not one is the founder of a religion. They were philosophers, discoursing in their petty academies; not authors of a system of religion, claiming the inspiration of heaven, and professing to effect the spiritual deliverance of mankind. What I look for, is the founder of a religious faith—independent, new, authoritative, ostensible.

“The votaries of Polytheism, with the fables entwined around their histories, come not up to my demand; and if they did, would only excite disgust, by their avowed profligacy, cruelty, and sordid covetousness. I want still the promulgator of a revelation from heaven.

“At length, I descry one arising obscurely in the eastern regions of Christendom, at a time when its primitive faith was peculiarly corrupted and debased. I SEE MOHAMMED APPEAR. I obtain what I required; I compare his claims; I ask, what were his professions? what his personal character? what his promises to his followers? what the spirit he breathed? what the example he set? I have not long to wait for a reply. The case speaks for itself.

“I see him indulge in the grossest vices; I see him transgressing perpetually even the licentious rules which he had prescribed to himself; I hear him lay claim to a special commission from heaven to riot in the most unlimited sensuality. This is more than enough for my argument.

“But I look again: I see him violent, rapacious, impetuous, sanguinary; I see him pay court to the peculiar vices of the people among whom he wished to propagate his doctrine; I see him promise, as the reward of his followers, a voluptuous paradise, where the objects of their base affections were to be almost innumerable, gifted with transcendent beauty and eternal youth. I can examine no further.

“From a character so base, I turn to the holy Jesus; I contrast—but I pause. I cannot insult your feelings

by comparing all the points of ineffable purity and loveliness in the founder of Christianity, with the compound of sensuality, pride, and cruelty, in the eastern impostor. You feel how the presumption of the truth of our religion is heightened, inconceivably heightened, by the contrast in the only case at all similar, found in the lapse of ages."

This argument has been admirably touched by Bishop Sherlock also, but we have not space to insert it; but those who would see it may consult Wilson's *Evidences of Christianity*, vol. ii. p. 104.

Again, we ask, must not a Moral Philosophy be very defective that leaves out of view, or makes no particular and practical use of, the pure morality of the character and life of Jesus Christ? Must not the students of this most important of all sciences, through this defect, have labored under a great disadvantage, if not in ascertaining the exact path of their duty, at least in possessing one of the most attractive and perfect guides in the pursuit of that path? And will not those who study this system of Moral Philosophy, which supplies the defect alluded to, be induced to study the morality of the inspired biography of Jesus, and extend their researches into the biography of many others, who have imbibed his spirit, have felt deeply the influence of his religion, and have done much, by a blameless and useful course, to spread that religion in the world?

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As we have drawn so largely upon the sacred scriptures for rules and examples of moral duty, it seems to accord with the practical object of the work to conclude with a brief account, by Bishop Wilson, of the tendency of the Christian revelation to promote, in the highest degree, human happiness.

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843. In the preceding portions of this work, from what sources have the duties of man been drawn?

844. What other source of instruction in human duty may be conveniently and profitably resorted to?

845. Where is such biography to be found?

846. In this class of writings, what characters most deserve our study and imitation?

847. What is, or should be, the great purpose of biographical works?

848. In how many prominent aspects is Christ's character presented to us in the sacred scriptures?

849. What preliminary remarks has Paley, in his *Evidences*, made concerning the character of Christ?



850. Wherein do we discover his piety, and devotion to his Heavenly Father?

851. Wherein do we discover his benevolence and compassion toward man?

852. What do we learn from Christ, in the practice of meekness and lowliness of spirit?

853. What aid does his example furnish, with respect to a superiority to the world?

854. What do the Scriptures inform us concerning his strict temperance and command of the inferior appetites?

855. Does the biography of Christ furnish an example of fortitude and constancy?

856. Was his conduct marked by prudence and discretion?

857. What further illustrations of his prudence may be mentioned?

858. Having now considered the separate graces of our Savior's personal character, what observation may be made respecting the union of them in his most perfect life?

859. Not only so; were not the opposite and apparently contradictory graces found in him in equal proportion?

860. What is further to be observed in the character of Jesus Christ?

861. What was the result of this combination and proportion of excellences?

862, 863. What other observations upon the example of Christ deserve our notice?

864. What was there in the class of character and station which Christ occupied, adapted to our case?

865. In view, then, of all these distinguishing peculiarities of the character of Jesus Christ, what comprehensive definition of human duty may be produced?

866. Christian, as distinguished from moral philosophy?

867. In what eloquent terms has this contrast between the character of Christ, and that of other founders of religion, been drawn by the pen of Bishop Wilson?

## CHAPTER VI.

### TENDENCY OF REVELATION TO PROMOTE HUMAN HAPPINESS.

868. THERE is a genuine, strong, essential tendency in every part of Christianity to elevate man, to deliver him from intellectual and moral bondage, to fill his mind with truth, and purity, and love; to engage him in the pursuit of the highest object, and aid him in following it.

869. It is susceptible of easy proof that man wants something more than mere reason, or moral virtue, or the light of nature. He requires a way of forgiveness, a spring of new life and strength for obedience, a clear revelation of immortality. If reason and its kindred powers are allowed to have a tendency toward human happiness, how much more has Christianity that bearing,

which embraces all, and more than all, that conscience and tradition ever taught, and which superadds a peculiar method of redemption of its own, by the Son and Spirit of God?

Christianity, indeed, is, REASON PURIFIED, VIRTUE EXALTED AND RENDERED PRACTICAL, NATURAL RELIGION SUSTAINED BY REDEMPTION. When Christianity triumphs, it is the victory of the highest reason, of the loftiest virtue and religion.

Christianity appears only as the minister of truth, the assuager of human woe, the teacher of good things; the enemy of all that is unjust, cruel, impure; the friend of all that is right, chaste, benevolent; the child of heaven, and the preparer for its joys.

*The Bearing of Christianity as to Nations.*

870. What are nations but masses of individuals? What is social, but the multiplication of personal happiness? It is quite obvious, then, that if Christianity takes the direction of personal happiness, it promotes, also, national and universal.

871. It *supplies the defects of human laws*. It is seated in the conscience, it interposes a divine tribunal, it goes to the principle of obedience, it restrains not by fear of punishment merely, but by the desire (which it produces) to please God and benefit our fellow-creatures. What are oaths without Christianity as their basis? What are human statutes, without the authority of the Supreme Legislator?

872. Again: Christianity *goes to subdue the selfishness of man*, and to implant that regard for the welfare of others which is the spring of genuine patriotism and devotion to the good of our country. And what must be the beneficent working of that religion whose main object is to prevent the selfish exercise of the passions!

873. And why need we further speak of the *bearings of the charity of Christianity*, of its spirit of beneficence, its forgiveness of injuries, its delight in communicating good, its genuine, diffusive, heartfelt sympathy? Must not all this go to the cementing together of the society of mankind, and the rendering of nations one great and united family?

And what is the *tendency of all the Christian precepts*?—

of its relative duties, its rules for the lowest and highest stations in society?—of the commands which restrain, animate, and direct every class of persons in a state?—the injunctions which go to extinguish the causes of disunion, turbulence, sedition, war?

874. Again: how can we speak adequately of the **INDIRECT TENDENCY** of the Gospel to advance the temporal and spiritual welfare of nations? It indirectly works upon thousands whom it never persuades to receive its yoke. It operates by the medium of others. It raises the standard of morals. It induces large bodies of men to imitate, in various respects, the conduct of its genuine disciples. Each Christian is a center of influence, in which his example and instructions are continually operating.

875. Thus, by degrees, public opinion begins to work; and as this spreads, it reaches magistrates, it sways the minds of legislators, it opens the ears of princes, it leads them to the encouragement and support of revealed religion; and thus it brings down that blessing upon states which is the spring of real prosperity.

As public opinion is elevated, and magistrates and legislators are swayed by its dictates, the spirit of improvement grows; one evil after another is detected; institutions in harmony with Christian benevolence arise; habits and practices of a contrary nature drop off; all becomes more pure in domestic life, more paternal in government, more pacific and secure in public council. In short, the tendency of Christianity is to raise up man from the depths of degradation and misery; to bless him in every relation of life—as a subject of civil society, as a member of the domestic circle, as a reasonable and accountable creature, as an heir of immortality.

876. With great unanimity all competent judges, including adversaries, admit, that *the result, if the Christian religion were acted upon by all mankind*, would be an unexampled degree of general happiness. Men of all characters, even unbelievers themselves, if we except a few of the very grossest; statesmen and legislators of all ages since the promulgation of the Gospel; philosophers and moralists of almost every school—unite in their admissions of the excellent tendency of the Christian religion. Many of them are ignorant of its true principles, yet they allow,

with one consent, its beneficial tendency upon states and kingdoms—they would have all men Christians from mere regard to the peace of the world; they admit that if mankind were under its practical guidance, the earth would present a scene of happiness, such as has never yet been witnessed or conceived of.

877. Of any other religion, or pretended remedy for human evils, who that understands the question would honestly wish for the universal diffusion, or would augur from that diffusion universal happiness? Who would wish all mankind Epicureans, Stoics, Jewish Pharisees? Who would desire to see any form of Polytheism universally prevalent? Who would wish the whole human race Mohammedans? Who would desire infidelity or human philosophy to establish itself everywhere as the sole guide of man? Conscience speaks plainly enough when such a supposition is made. But who that knows what Christianity is, but would most heartily, and from his inmost soul, desire that all the world were Christians? Who does not feel that Christianity is pregnant with tendencies and seeds of things, which want only a clear field, to turn the world into a second Paradise?

868. The tendency of Christianity?

869. Christianity adapted to the wants of man?

870. Such being the proper influence of the Gospel upon individuals, what is its bearing as to nations?

871. Its relation to human laws?

872. Its influence upon the selfishness of man?

873. The charity of Christianity?

874. The indirect influences of Christianity?

875. Effect upon public opinion?

876. What do all competent judges, including adversaries, admit would be the result, if the Christian religion were acted upon by mankind?

877. Of any other system of morality or religion, is the universal diffusion desirable?

THE END.





## TESTIMONIALS.

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*From Rev. Peter Bullions, D.D., Professor of Ancient Languages in Albany Academy, and author of a series of Grammars and Classical Works.*

### BOYD'S MORAL PHILOSOPHY.

The Rev. James R. Boyd, Principal of the Jefferson County Institute, and author of a work on Rhetoric already well received, has conferred another important benefit on the cause of sound learning by the preparation of this book. In no branch of education, perhaps, was a good textbook for schools more needed than in this. The work of Paley, though possessing many excellences, is acknowledged to be not only defective, but, on some important principles, radically unsound; while that of Wayland, greatly defective in respect of illustration, is for that reason suited only to those teachers who have the time and the ability necessary to supply these orally in the time of teaching. Mr. Boyd proposes to remedy these evils, and, by a free and judicious, but not servile use of the ample materials to be found in standard writers on this subject at home and abroad, to furnish, on a solid basis, a work, the study of which shall serve not only to cultivate the intellectual powers, but "to mend the heart."

For such a task Mr. Boyd is well qualified by his talents and education, and still more by his long experience as a successful instructor, and I have no doubt his work will prove an important auxiliary, both to teachers and students, in this branch of study.

P. BULLIONS,  
*Professor of Languages, Albany Academy.*

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*From J. N. Wyckoff, D.D., Pastor of the Second Dutch Church, Albany, and Trustee of the Albany Male and Female Academies.*

Mr. Boyd has done me the favor to submit to my inspection the plan or synopsis of a work on Moral Philosophy, compiled from all the best authors extant, amplified by his own reflection and study, after years of review in the duties of an instructor, and particularly adapted to the necessities of those who require instruction in the science. Strongly sympathizing in the difficulties this work is intended to obviate, I hail it as most opportune, and judge it to be well adapted in the details of its plan, by the absence of technical phraseology and by other simplifications, to the intended purpose.

J. N. WYCKOFF,  
*Pastor of the Second Dutch Church, Albany.*

## TESTIMONIALS.

*From T. Romeyn Beck, LL.D., Principal of the Albany Academy.*

Albany, August 19, 1846.

The Rev. James R. Boyd has read to me the preface of a work on Moral Philosophy, which he is about publishing for the use of academies and common schools, and has also given me an account of its contents. From my previous acquaintance with the literary qualifications of Mr. Boyd, and with the work on Rhetoric of which he is the author, I have no doubt that the present one will be well executed, and that it will be worthy of introduction in our schools and other institutions of learning.

I also entertain the idea that a work on the plan of Mr. Boyd's is needed for the purposes of instruction.

T. ROMEYN BECK.

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*From Rev. J. N. Campbell, D.D., Pastor of the First Presbyterian Church, Albany, and Trustee of Albany Male and Female Academies.*

Albany, August 14, 1846

It will not be questioned, I suppose, by any one, that such a work as Rev. Mr. Boyd proposes to publish is very greatly needed for the use of our high-schools and academies. The plan of the work, so far as I have been able to examine it, appears to me to be well arranged and adapted to the end he has in view; and from what I know of Mr. Boyd, I judge that he is quite competent to execute it.

J. N. CAMPBELL.

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*From S. S. Randall, Esq., Deputy Superintendent of Common Schools, Editor of the District-School Journal, &c.*

Albany, August 17, 1846.

Having been favored with a perusal of the introduction to, and table of contents of, an elementary treatise on Moral Philosophy, proposed to be published by J. R. Boyd, A.M., Principal of Jefferson County Institute, I am free to express my general approbation of the plan and design of the work, and my conviction that it is well calculated to fill that place in the course of elementary instruction in our academies and other institutions of learning for which it is intended by the author. In a work of this description, embracing within its range the entire field of Christian ethics, and social as well as individual morality, it is next to impossible to avoid an occasional excursion upon debatable and controverted ground; but I am not aware that the present work is liable to more serious objections on this ground than most of its predecessors in this important branch of mental and moral science; and the attractive, discriminating, and practical manner in which the cardinal virtues of humanity are recommended and enforced throughout the greater portion of the work amply compensate, in my judgment, for any defects which may be supposed to arise from the temperate assertion and maintenance of a few principles upon which an honest difference of opinion prevails in our communities. The general scope and tenor of the work is eminently calculated to expand, elevate, and purify the affections and the heart—to enlighten and strengthen the intellect, and diffuse among the rising generation the seeds of truth, goodness, and virtue.

S. S. RANDALL,

*Dep. Supt. of Common Schools, Ed. Dist. School Journal, &c.*

## TESTIMONIALS.

*From L. S. Parsons, Esq., Principal of Albany Female Academy.*

Female Academy, Albany, August 17, 1846.

DEAR SIR,

Having examined with some care the manuscript sheets submitted to me, giving the *table of contents* and *design* of your new work, entitled "Eclectic Moral Philosophy," I am happy to say that I am much pleased with the matter and manner of arrangement. The authors from whom you have principally drawn are, undoubtedly, the most safe and interesting of all those who have written on moral subjects.

I will only add, that, in common with other teachers, I have long felt the need of some *text-book* on "morals" better adapted to the wants of academic instructors and pupils than either of those now in general use, viz., *Paley* and *Wayland*, and I am not sorry that the business of furnishing such a work has fallen into your hands.

With great respect, I am truly yours,

L. S. PARSONS,  
*Principal of the A. F. Academy.*

REV. J. R. BOYD.





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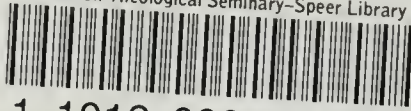






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